NATION

SC raps cash-stash accused Justice Varma

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

The Bear is back: Sensex falls by 572pts, Nifty 156pts

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

Women's Euro 2025 title: England beats Spain in a penalty shootout

≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 29 JULY 2025 | TUESDAY | BENGALURU | 3 SAFAR, 1447 AH | Vol 4 | Issue No 205 | Pages: 8

SALAR UPCLOSE

K'TAKA'S CASTE SURVEY WILL BE THE BEST: MADHUSUDAN

BENGALURU, 28 JULY

Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission Chairman Madhusudan R Naik said the upcoming socio-educational survey, to be held from 22 September to 7 October, will surpass Telangana's model in scale and data quality. Naik in an exclusive interview with Salar News said the digitally driven exercise will ensure minimal disruption to teaching, using Dasara holidays and offering teachers compensatory earned leave. The survey replaces outdated 2015 data and will assess social, educational, economic, and political indicators. Online participation and outreach to resident associations will aid inclusion. He clarified that the state's survey won't conflict with the Centre's 2026 caste census. He expressed confidence that the report will be fair, scientific, and widely accepted.

SALAR NEWS

>>>More on Page 5

In LS, govt hails Op Sindoor; Oppn flags Pahalgam failure

Rajnath, EAM reject Trump's claims on truce

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

In a high-stakes debate in the Lok Sabha, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh declared that Operation Sindoor—India's military strike on terror sites in Pakistan—has only been paused after meeting its strategic objectives and will resume if provoked. "Today's India replaces dossiers with decisive action," Singh asserted.

Singh dismissed suggestions that the cessation of hostilities was linked to US President Donald Trump's alleged mediation via trade negotiations. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar backed this, confirming that no conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Trump occurred between 22 April and 17 June, and "at no stage" was a trade link discussed.

The Opposition, however, zeroed in on alleged security lapses that led to the Pahalgam terror attack, questioning the Centre's response and demanding accountability. Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi asked how terrorists managed to infiltrate Pahalgam and how many Indian fighter jets were lost in the operation, citing Trump's claim of five or six downed aircraft.

NCP (SP) MP Supriya Sule and Samajwadi Party's Ramashankar Rajbhar challenged the operation's success, with Rajbhar demanding a swifter, harsher "Operation Tandoor" to hunt down the terrorists responsible for the Pahalgam attack.

Responding, Singh said Pakistan used missiles, rockets, and drones to target Indian military assets but failed to inflict any damage. Congress' Gandhi sought to know from Singh why Operation Sindoor was halted. "Aapne roki kyun (why did you halt)," asked Gandhi, a question that had ruling party members on their feet.

Singh dismissed accusations of delay, defending the government's timing. On opposition criticism, he warned that India no longer tolerates adversaries that misuse peace overtures: "If the adversary uses terrorism, then being decisive is the only option."

Jaishankar described India's post-Pahalgam military and diplomatic response as a "new normal," outlining a five-point doctrine: swift retaliation, refusal to succumb to nuclear threats, and international mobilisation. Only three of 190 UN nations opposed Operation Sindoor, he noted. Home Minister Amit Shah and Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi are expected to speak on Tuesday, with PM Modi likely to close the 16-hour debate. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

RAJNATH SAYS OP SINDOOR SUCCESSFUL, GOGOI ASKS REALLY?

RAJNATH SINGH: Soon after the Pahalgam attack, our Armed Forces struck nine terrorist infrastructure sites, neutralising over 100 terrorists.	**GAURAV GOGOI:** It's been 100 days since the attack, yet justice remains elusive. How did the terrorists reach Pahalgam despite our drones, Pegasus, satellites, CRPF, BSF, and CISF? Why weren't they intercepted?
RAJNATH: India paused its action because our political and military objectives were achieved. Claims that we stopped under pressure are baseless.	**GOGOI:** The entire country stood behind Modi. On 10th May, we heard of a ceasefire. Why? If Pakistan was ready to kneel, why did we stop? Trump claimed 26 times that he pushed both countries into a ceasefire.
RAJNATH: As the PM rightly said, Operation Sindoor is paused, not ended. If Pakistan attempts another misadventure, we're ready to respond with even greater intensity.	**GOGOI:** You say Operation Sindoor is incomplete and Pakistan might strike again — then how is this a success? Why was war never the intention? When will you take PoK back?
RAJNATH: Oppn must ask this — did we lose a single brave soldier in this operation? No, we did not.	**GOGOI:** Trump said 5–6 jets were downed. Each costs crores. Rajnath must clarify: how many of our jets were lost? Our jawans and the public deserve honesty.

OPERATION MAHADEV

PAHALGAM TERROR ATTACK MASTERMIND KILLED

SRINAGAR, 28 JULY

In a major counter-terror breakthrough, the Army's elite Para Commandos on Monday killed the mastermind of the Pahalgam terror attack, Suleiman Shah alias Asif, along with two associates in a forested area on Srinagar's outskirts, officials said.

Codenamed Operation Mahadev, the action was launched after security forces intercepted a technical signal from a satellite phone used by the Pahalgam attackers. Shah, a former commando of Pakistan's Special Service Group, later joined Hafiz Saeed's Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

The other two terrorists killed were identified as Jibran, accused in last year's Sonamarg Tunnel attack that killed seven, including a doctor, and Hamza Afghani.

The encounter began around 11am, when troops from 24 Rashtriya Rifles and 4 Para unit visually identified the group in Dachigam forest. A drone deployed at 8 am confirmed their location. Shots were first fired at 11 am, killing all three in the initial exchange. A cleansing operation followed and their bodies were recovered and identified by 12:45 pm.

Recovered from the site were one M4 carbine, two AK rifles, 17 rifle grenades and other arms. Security forces suspect the group was plotting a major terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir.

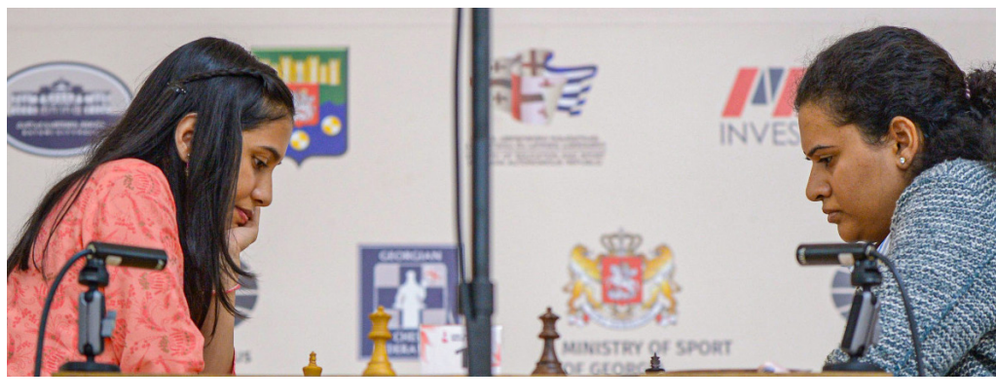
The operation was carried out in response to the 22 April Pahalgam massacre, where 26 people, mostly tourists, were gunned down at Baisaran meadows. This led to the launch of Operation Sindoor on 7 May targeting cross-border terror infrastructure.

Inspector General of Police (Kashmir Zone) VK Birdi confirmed it was a long-drawn operation. Chinar Corps posted on X: "Three terrorists have been neutralised in an intense firefight. Operation continues."

The bodies have been handed to local police for legal formalities. *—PTI*

The hideout of the terrorists **PHOTO: PTI**

INDIAN CHECKMATE QUEEN



Divya Deshmukh, 19, became the youngest winner of the Women's World Cup in Batumi, Georgia, on Monday, defeating veteran Koneru Humpy in an all-Indian final. The triumph not only earned her the title but also the Grandmaster title, a feat few expected at the start. She is the first Indian woman to win the championship **PHOTO: PTI** *>>>Report, P8*

2 dead, 32 injured in 2nd stampede in two days

BARABANKI, 28 JULY

Two people were killed and 32 injured in a stampede at a the Avsaneshwar temple in Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki after a live electric wire, broken by monkeys, fell onto a tin shed early on Monday, officials said. The incident occurred at the Avsaneshwar temple in the Haidergarh area during when devotees gathered for 'jalabhishek' (offering water as a ritual). *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Thailand and Cambodia agree to immediate ceasefire

PUTRAJAYA, 28 JULY

Thailand and Cambodia have agreed to an "immediate and unconditional" ceasefire from midnight to resolve deadly border clashes, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said Monday. Anwar, who chaired the talks as head of the ASEAN regional bloc, said both sides have reached a common understanding to take steps to return to normalcy. Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet and Thai Acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai have agreed to "an immediate and unconditional ceasefire with effect from... midnight of 28 July," Anwar said as he read out a joint statement. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

Operation of the SIR can continue, the court added, with enumeration forms accepted even after the draft roll's publication **PHOTO: PTI**

SC allows SIR in Bihar, asks EC to take Aadhaar

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday directed the Election Commission (EC) to continue accepting Aadhaar and voter ID cards during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, stressing that the goal should be "en masse inclusion" rather than exclusion.

The bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi refused to stay the publication of the draft electoral roll, scheduled for 1 August, with the final list due on 30 September. Opposition parties have claimed the exercise could disenfranchise crores of eligible voters.

The court noted Aadhaar and voter ID have a "presumption of genuineness", unlike ration cards, which can be easily forged. It reiterated an earlier order directing the EC to accept these documents and declined to grant interim relief, stating the matter will be fully heard and decided.

Operation of the SIR can continue, the court added, with enumeration forms accepted even after the draft roll's publication. "Don't undermine the power of the court. If illegality is found, we will quash everything," the bench said. The court agreed with the EC's affidavit acknowledging Aadhaar and voter ID usage, but sought timelines for final arguments by 29 July. *—PTI*

Govt reinstates 4 cops suspended for RCB stampede

BENGALURU, 28 JULY

The Karnataka government on Monday revoked the suspension of four police officers, including the then Bengaluru Police Commissioner B Dayananda, in connection with the June 4 stampede outside Chinnaswamy Stadium that left 11 dead and 56 injured.

The suspension of Inspector General of Police Vikash Kumar Vikash remains in force, as proceedings related to his case are ongoing in the Karnataka High Court, despite the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) having quashed his suspension on July 1. The state government has challenged the CAT order.

The decision to revoke suspensions follows the submission of reports by both a Judicial Commission, led by retired High Court judge Justice John Michael Cunha, and a magisterial inquiry led by Deputy Commissioner Jagadish G. Both inquiries were ordered after the tragic incident during IPL victory celebrations for the RCB team.

The officers reinstated are IPS officers B Dayananda (ADGP) and Shekar H Tekkannavar (SP), along with Karnataka State Police Service officers C Balakrishna (DySP) and AK Girish (Inspector). Disciplinary proceedings under relevant service rules will continue. *—PTI*

PROBE ORDERED

Centre flags carcinogen fears in acidity medicine Ranitidine

BENGALURU, 28 JULY

The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) directed drug regulators in all state and union territory to ensure manufacturers of Ranitidine -- a commonly used acidity medicine --monitor NDMA levels, a potentially cancer-causing impurity, in both the active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) and formulations of the drug.

The CDSCO asked manufacturers to limiting the medicine's shelf life, modify storage recommendations and enhance NDMA testing protocols across their supply chains.

The move comes after a recommendation by the Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB) to Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi.

TDAB had reviewed a report submitted by an expert committee on the impurity concerns around Ranitidine. Based on this, it called for a larger committee to examine all aspects, including storage conditions that aid in NDMA formation.

The Board also recommended that the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) conduct a study to further assess Ranitidine's safety. The International Agency for Research on Cancer stated that Ranitidine falls in the Group 2A carcinogen category, making it a probable human carcinogen.

Ranitidine, commonly prescribed for acid reflux and ulcers, was withdrawn from several markets. *—Agencies*

Microsoft end ties with Indian firm over Russian oil

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Microsoft Corp stopped providing services to Russian oil giant Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy following European Union (EU) sanctions, prompting the Indian refinery to sue the tech giant in the Delhi High Court.

Microsoft restricted Nayara Energy's access to its own data, proprietary tools, and products - despite these being acquired under fully paid-up licences. Rosneft owns a 49.13 per cent stake in Nayara Energy Ltd, which owns and operates a 20 million tonnes a year oil refinery at Gujarat's Vadinar and over 6,750 petrol pumps. *—PTI*

Maddur gets projects worth ₹1,146 cr

CM says this is proof that State is not bankrupt, accuses BJP of playing politics over fertilisers

MANDYA, 28 JULY

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday launched projects worth Rs 1,146 crore in Maddur, as he lashed out at the BJP, asking what they had done for the State.

"If there is no money, would it have been possible to launch development works worth crores of rupees?" he said, hitting back at the BJP for claiming the State had no money.

In two years, the Congress government has done a lot of development work, he said. "There is no evidence for any development work in the four years of the BJP government's tenure".

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar added that Rs 500 crore was allocated to develop canals in Maddur.

"(Minister) N Cheluvarayaswamy is working on bringing agricultural university to Mandya. We have launched developmental works across the seven assembly constituencies in Mandya," he said.

Siddaramaiah further accused the BJP of "misinformation" on urea and pointed fingers at the saffron party-led government at the Centre for inadequate supplies.

Noting that he had written to the Union government demanding immediate supply of fertiliser to the State, citing increase in acreage under sowing due to early monsoon, he urged the BJP leaders to speak to the Union minister and ensure supplies, instead of protesting.

He said the Centre should have supplied 6,80,655 MT of urea to the State, but they had supplied only 5,16,959 MT. "I have written to the Centre. This time, the monsoon started early". He further claimed that there is no supply of urea and other fertilisers like DAP (Diammonium phosphate) in BJP-ruled Madhya Pradesh and Haryana. It is the Central government's responsibility to supply fertilizer. The State government job is only to distribute it, Siddaramaiah said.

"Instead of doing politics, BJP leaders -- BY Vijayendra, R Ashoka and MPs should go to Union Minister JP Nadda and get fertiliser to the State," he said.

Despite the BJP's political tactics for the 2028 Assembly polls, the Congress will come back to power, the CM asserted, and said, "HD Kumaraswamy (of JD(S)) won from the Mandya Parliamentary seat. He is now holding an important Ministry in the Union government. Let him ensure supply of fertiliser to Karnataka. Instead they (opposition BJP and JDS) want to hold agitation. This drama... won't go on for long".

Shivakumar, Agriculture Cheluvarayaswamy, ruling Congress MLAs and ministers were present at the event.

—Salar News with Agencies

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with DCM DK Shivakumar, minister N Cheluvarayaswamy and others during the inauguration for the developmental works worth rupees 1,146 crores at Maddur on Monday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

- Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that Rs 500 crore was allocated to develop canals in Maddur

> **Should we learn a lesson from BJP or BY Vijayendra? When his father, BS Yediyurappa, was the Chief Minister, as fertilisers and seeds were not supplied on time, farmers had held protests, which led to Golibar, killing two farmers. They should be ashamed. They killed two farmers**
>
> -Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

> **When Modi came to power, he had promised Achche din and Rs 15 lakh in every account. All of you must ask HD Kumaraswamy where that is. JD(S) workers must not waste their time remaining that party. It is the time for the Congress party now. Take a considered call on your political careers**
>
> -DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

BJP Kisan Morcha begins protest over 'shortage of urea'

BENGALURU, 28 JULY

The BJP Kisan Morcha on Monday began its week-long protest against the Congress government in State over an alleged shortage of urea.

The party's farmers wing staged protests in Davangere, Koppal and Dharwad, demanding the State government to ensure adequate supply of urea to farmers.

In Davangere, the protest was led by former minister MP Renukacharya. He and other protesters were detained by the police and taken away in a vehicle.

The party will continue to hold similar protests in various parts of the State, a party official said.

On Sunday, State BJP President B Y Vijayendra accused the state government of creating an "artificial shortage" of urea in various parts of the State because of its "mismanagement".

Targeting the Congress government, citing media reports about farmers' protests against urea shortage, Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R Ashoka had said, the government should have been alert and paid attention towards ensuring storage of necessary amount of fertiliser and its timely distribution when the monsoon arrived a month in advance this time.

—PTI

Amid rains, coastal dists get high tide warnings

MANGALURU, 28 JULY

The India Metrological Department (IMD) has issued a high tide warning of over 4m height for the State's coastal districts – Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada – until 29 July. The department also said that there would heavy rains along the coast as well as Malnad districts – Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru and Kodagu – until 3 August, updating the previous announcement which forecast heavy downpour until 28 July.

Uttara Kannada Deputy Commissioner Rashmi Priya said the district administration has barred fishermen from entering the sea and warned people against going near the shores.

"Costal watchers have been deployed along the shores to prevent fishermen and tourists from going near the sea for any reason," Priya said.

Many educational institutions up to 2nd Pre-University (PUC) also declared a holiday on Monday due to continuous rains.

FOUR BRIDGES SUBMERGED IN BELAGAVI

For the fourth time this monsoon, 16 villages in Chikkodi taluk of Belagavi district have been cut off as four bridges across the Krishna river were submerged due to rising water levels.

Belagavi Deputy Commissioner Mohammed Roshan said that Krishna river and its sub river Doodhaganga were swelling due to flow to the river from Maharashtra.

"The Krishna is rising not due to local rains, but due to inflows from Maharashtra," he said.

—Salar News

The IMD forecast heavy rains across 6 districts **PHOTO: PTI**

Landslide chokes M'luru–B'luru highway

MANGALURU, 28 JULY

A major landslide at Mannagudda in Kadaba taluk on Sunday night severely disrupted traffic on National Highway 75, officials said.

Following the incident, the police have diverted traffic through several roads connecting to the highway, bypassing the portion affected by the mudslide.

The NH earthmoving equipment has been deployed to clear the highway, said the authorities.

According to police, all heavy-tonnage vehicles have been diverted via available State highways, and smaller vehicles through major district roads. This arrangement has minimised the time taken by the travellers between City and Mangaluru, taking the inner roads.

—PTI

PREPARING FOR FESTIVITIES

Vendor gives a final touch to Lakshmi idols for the upcoming Varamahalakshmi festival in Bengaluru on Monday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Youth Cong felicitates student toppers

AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan presided over the event held at Puneeth Rajkumar Circle, in Bengaluru **PHOTO: SALAR**

BENGALURU, 27 JULY

Youth Congress leaders of CV Raman Nagar constituency hosted a felicitation ceremony to honour students who scored over 80 per cent in SSLC, ICSE, and PUC examinations for the academic year 2024–25.

The event at Puneeth Rajkumar Circle in GM Palya witnessed enthusiastic participation from students and parents alike, with AICC Secretary and Bangalore Central Lok Sabha candidate Mansoor Ali Khan presiding as the chief guest.

"This generation is our hope. Their hard work must be recognised, and platforms like these remind us of the responsibility we have to support them," Mansoor Ali Khan said in his address.

The ceremony also saw the presence of former MLC Narayanswamy, CV Raman Nagar MLA candidate Anand, along with several block and ward presidents, local leaders, and Karnataka Youth Congress representatives.

Each student was felicitated with a shawl, garland, memento, certificate, and a sweet box. Additionally, they received a Rs 500 Sapna Book House gift card to support their academic needs.

CV Raman Nagar Youth Congress leaders said the initiative was to boost the morale of hardworking students, many of whom come from modest backgrounds

—Salar News

HM orders strict action against drugs after Mysuru MDMA bust

BENGALURU, 28 JULY

State Home Minister G Paramehwara has instructed police across the state to intensify efforts against drug-related crimes after Maharashtra police busted a facility Mysuru. The operation uncovered an MDMA manufacturing facility, linked to a peddler caught in Mumbai, they said.

Acknowledging police lapses, Paramehwara stated, "It is a lapse on the part of the local police. I have given strict instructions to take action against those involved."

He explained that the Mumbai police traced the MDMA back to Mysuru, where the drug was reportedly produced in a shed.

G Paramehwara **PHOTO: PTI**

The Minister expressed concern over porous enforcement, stating, "The question is how porous we are in terms of looking at all these things. I have directed our commissionerate in Mysuru and other districts to ensure such activities are curbed."

He also highlighted the importance of police vigilance, saying, "If local police are unaware of such activities, and other agencies or states raid and arrest, it indicates lapses. I have asked for action against the responsible officials".

After the raid, Narasimharaja Police Station Inspector Lakshmikant Talwar was suspended pending an inquiry.

—PTI

- After Maharashtra police traced an MDMA manufacturing facility to Mysuru, Narasimharaja Police Station Inspector Lakshmikant Talwar was suspended pending an inquiry

YATHINDRA SAYS HIS KING-CM STATEMENT WAS 'MISINTERPRETED'

MYSURU, 28 JULY

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's son Yathindra defended his statement where he compared his father's contribution in Mysuru with those of the esteemed king Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar, saying his comments were "misinterpreted".

The Congress MLC also rejected the Opposition's demand for an apology, emphasising his respect for the late 24th Mysore king.

Yathindra had claimed that the Congress government led by his father Siddaramaiah had "equalled, if not surpassed" the contribution of the king. "My intention was not to lessen his contribution but to speak highly about our government," Yathindra said.

JD(S) leaders protested in Mysuru against the remarks. "Yathindra may compare his father with other politicians, not with Mysore King.... The only achievement of Siddaramaiah is renaming corruption ridden MUDA as MDA," Mysuru JD(S) Chief TK Cheluvegowda said.

—Salar News with Agencies

Elephant attacks: Khandre orders constant vigil

YADGIR, 28 JULY

Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister Eshwar Khandre on Monday directed the forest department to maintain constant surveillance in areas prone to human–wildlife conflict and take all necessary measures to protect human lives.

The directive comes in the wake of two recent deaths in elephant attacks in Chikkamagaluru district.

Expressing grief over the fatalities, the minister, in a statement, stressed that forest officials must act immediately when elephants are spotted in human settlements

"It is raining all over the State. Lakes and dams are full. The authorities should pay attention to why elephants are coming to the civilian areas, even though enough food is are available in the forest," the minister later said. "There are complaints that elephant trenches have been blocked due to continuous rains, solar wire fences and tentacle fencing have fallen and the electric connection has been cut off. These should be restored immediately. The forest patrol personnel should keep a constant watch".

—Agencies

BLAZE OF ANGUISH

Miscreants burnt more than 10 vehicles near Ulsoor market in Bengaluru on the intervening night between Sunday and Monday **PHOTO: SALAR**

RAMYA FILES A COMPLAINT

Darshan's fanbase sends Ramya death, rape threats

BENGALURU, 28 JULY

Actor and former Mandya MP Divya Spandana, known as Ramya, filed a police complaint against online abusers on Monday, stating that she had received "rape and murder threats" after commenting on the Supreme Court proceedings on the Darshan murder case.

Darshan is currently out on bail in connection with the murder of 33-year-old Renukaswamy.

Renukaswamy, a fan of Darshan, was allegedly killed for posting derogatory remarks about actor Pavitra Gowda, who was allegedly in a relationship with the star.

The Supreme Court recently rapped the Karnataka High Court for granting bail to Darshan, calling the move a perverse use of discretionary power. Ramya then wrote on X, "SC is a ray of hope for the common people of India".

Darshan, Ramya **PHOTO: PTI**

Following post, the Darshan fanbase allegedly sent Ramya death and rape threats.

On 27 July, the actor shared screenshots of some of the posts on Instagram saying, "There is no difference between the Renukaswammy's messages and the DBoss fan messages. It is because of trolls with a misogynistic mindset that women and young girls are subjected to harassment, rape, and murder."

Ramya said the abuse included "very sexual and vulgar messages".

"The trolling was so bad that I started to think if the situation is like this for me (a star), what would it be like for normal girls," she said after filing the complaint.

Meanwhile, the Karnataka State Women's Commission urged the Bengaluru Police Commissioner to take action against the surge of online abuse against women.

—PTI

SIT begins site inspections in D'sthala

DHARMASTHALA, 28 JULY

A team of police officials from the Special Investigation Team (SIT) constituted by the State government to probe the alleged mass burial sites in Dharmasthala began site inspections on Monday, police said.

Accompanied by land records officials, local police and district authorities, the SIT visited multiple locations, including the bathing ghats of the Nethravathi, at the entrance of Dharmasthala.

Locals said that the Nethravathi riverbankmay have been used for the mass burials.

—PTI

PHOTO: X

Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor's Pak homes get facelift

PESHAWAR, 28 JULY

The reconstruction and renovation work on the ancestral homes of legendary Indian actors Dilip Kumar and Raj Kapoor officially began in Pakistan's Peshawar city on Monday. The project worth Rs 70 million will be completed in two years. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government released the funds for the project, which will be into museums dedicated to the lives and careers of the legendary actors. The Directorate of Archaeology and Museums has been tasked with overseeing the work. Director of Archaeology, Abdus Samad said the project's primary goal was to safeguard the province's historical and cultural heritage while promoting heritag. This initiative will also create new employment opportunities. *—PTI*

MP Cong MLAs protest over OBC quota

BHOPAL, 28 JULY

Congress MLAs on Monday staged a protest on the premises of the Madhya Pradesh Assembly, holding toy chameleons to target the BJP government, alleging that it has been "changing its colour" on the issue of 27 per cent reservation for the Other Backward Classes (OBC). Legislators, led by Leader of Opposition Umang Singhar, staged the demonstration on the first day of the monsoon session, raising slogans against the state government. Singhar said that when the Supreme Court asked for answers, the government remained silent. But when the elections arrived, the government mislead the OBCs, he said. MLA Sachin Yadav alleged that the BJP government has changed its colour from time to time on the issue of 27 per cent reservation for OBCs. *—PTI*

Rohit Pawar in touch with BJP, claims Rane

PUNE, 28 JULY

Maharashtra BJP minister Nitesh Rane has claimed NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar had been in touch with the saffron party leaders, an assertion dismissed by the opposition legislator. Rohit, the grandnephew of Sharad Pawar and MLA from Karjat-Jamkhed in Ahilyanagar, dismissed Rane's claim, saying one should not speak when "he himself is stuck in the mud". Rohit said he has been with the same party since the beginning of his political career, while Rane had switched from the Congress to BJP. The Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) founded by Sharad Pawar split in 2023 after Ajit Pawar and other MLAs walked away and joined the BJP-Shiv Sena government.. *—PTI*

Karad linked to crime syndicate, says Beed spl court

MUMBAI, 28 JULY

A special court in Maharashtra's Beed has held that Walmik Karad, the prime accused in the murder of sarpanch of Massajog village, Santosh Deshmukh, appeared to be a member of an organised crime syndicate involved in unlawful activities. The special court, while rejecting Karad's discharge application, stated that he and the co-accused shot a video of the attack on the victim "to create terror of their gang/ syndicate." Deshmukh was abducted and tortured to death allegedly for attempting to stop an extortion bid targeting an energy company. Eight persons, including Karad were booked in the murder case. The CID has filed a chargesheet that is more than 1,200 pages long in the murder case and two related offences, including MCOCCA charges. *—PTI*

Whom did PM surrender to? Cong in LS

Cong asks how many Indian jets were downed, holds Shah accountable for Pahalgam

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

TThe Congress on Monday said Home Minister Amit Shah must take responsibility for the "security lapses" that allowed the Pahalgam terror attack, while asking the Centre to clarify how many Indian jets were downed during Operation Sindoor and "before whom did Prime Minister Narendra Modi surrender" to halt the military action against Pakistan.

Participating in a special discussion in the Lok Sabha, Congress's deputy leader in the House pointed out that the Union Home Minister kept saying that the backbone of terrorism has been broken, but the Uri, Balakot, and Pahalgam incidents still happened.

Charging at the BJP-led Union government, he asked, "Who will take responsibility, the (Jammu and Kashmir) LG? It is the home minister who must take responsibility. You cannot hide behind the LG. This government is such a coward and is so weak that it blamed even tour operators for the Pahalgam attack."

While claiming that the security framework and those taking decisions have become arrogant and they behave as if no one can question them. "But we will question" the lapses, Gogoi said.

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi speaks during a debate in the Lok Sabha on the Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor at the Monsoon session of Parliament in New Delhi, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

I want to tell the Government of India that the people of Jammu and Kashmir are not your enemies. We want peace with dignity. If our country has to move forward, then stop ranting about war and talk about dialogue (with Pakistan).

—Mehbooba Mufti, PDP Chief

Have they identified the terrorists (involved in Pahalgam attack)? Where they came from? I mean, for all we know, they could be homegrown terrorists. Why do you assume that they came from Pakistan? There's no evidence of that.

—P Chidambaram, Congress leader

Meanwhile, TMC MP Kalyan Banerjee said Indians were eager with "expectations" when Operation Sindoor was underway, but on May 10, a "ceasefire" happened.

"... Have you ever heard that a player batting at 90 and heading towards a century, declare the innings. Only Modiji can do this, no one else... It was a matter of completing 100 runs, ended up being at 90," he said.

Gogoi also slammed the government over US President Donald Trump's claim, made "26 times", that he used trade to bring about a ceasefire between India and Pakistan.

He said the Opposition wants to know from PM Narendra Modi that if Pakistan was ready to kneel before India, "why did you stop and before whom did you surrender?"

—PTI

RS adjourned amid Oppn protest over SIR in Bihar

NEW DELHI/HYDERABAD, 28 JULY

The Rajya Sabha witnessed yet another disruption on Monday as Opposition members protested against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voter rolls in Bihar. The Upper House was adjourned shortly after 2pm, following prior adjournments during the pre-lunch session.

During Zero Hour, Deputy Chairman Harivansh received 26 notices under Rule 267 requesting discussions on various topics, including SIR. He rejected these notices and called on a nominated member for her mention, prompting uproar from Opposition MPs, particularly from the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and Congress, who accused the government of "vote theft" and raised slogans.

As the House reconvened for Question Hour at noon, protests escalated with MPs entering the Well of the House, leading to another adjournment. Attempts to resume debate on The Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill 2025 at 2pm were similarly thwarted by ongoing demonstrations.

Outside the House, prominent leaders from the INDIA bloc, including Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Sonia Gandhi, rallied against the Election Commission's voter roll revision, branding it an attack on democracy. They held placards and banners, asserting that the SIR initiative threatens the voting rights of weaker sections ahead of the Assembly elections in Bihar.

AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi also condemned the electoral roll revision and accused the EC of creating "arbitrary" proof of citizenship criteria that may leave voters vulnerable to "abuse and extortion." *– Agencies*

MPs Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Kanimozhi Karunanidhi protest against EC's SIR in Bihar, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Congress asks Tharoor to debate, he says no

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

The Congress asked MP Shashi Tharoor if he was interested in speaking during the Operation Sindoor debate in Parliament but he declined and instead expressed a desire to speak on 'The Indian Ports Bill, 2025', party sources said on Monday.

Tharoor led the delegation on Operation Sindoor to other countries to speak about India's stand on terrorism. His enthusiastic endorsement of the government's action following the Pahalgham terror attack soured his ties with Congress, leading to speculations about whether he would speak in the Parliament and what he would speak about.

"It is a practise that senior leaders are asked...Gaurav Gogoi and K Suresh reached out to him (Tharoor) and asked if he was interested in speaking during the debate on Operation Sindoor, to which he said he is not interested and would like to speak on the ports bill," a senior Congress leader said, according to PTI.

There was no immediate response from Tharoor on the assertion by the party sources. Asked earlier whether he would speak on Operation Sindoor, he had earlier quipped that he is on a "maun vrat". *—Agencies*

DGCA acts against Air India for safety lapse

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Aviation regulator DGCA has initiated enforcement action against Air India after finding that the inspection of emergency slide was overdue in an aircraft, Union Minister Murlidhar Mohol said on Monday.

In a written reply, the Minister of State for Civil Aviation said that during the audit of Air India, DGCA found that the inspection of emergency slide was overdue. "DGCA immediately grounded the aircraft till the required rectification was carried out. DGCA has initiated enforcement action against Air India and the responsible personnel as per Enforcement Policy and Procedure Manual of DGCA," he told the Rajya Sabha.

Specific details, such as when the audit was conducted and when the enforcement action was initiated, were not disclosed.

The minister's response was to DMK member Tiruchi Siva's query on whether the government is aware that aircraft operated by Air India, in weeks preceding the crash of flight AI 171 in June, were allowed to fly with overdue emergency slide inspections, in violation of mandatory safety norms. The member also wanted to know whether accountability has been fixed on DGCA for regulatory oversight failure.

In recent times, Air India has come under the scanner of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) for various lapses.

Indian airlines have reported 183 technical glitches in their planes so far in 2025, the Civil Aviation Ministry told Rajya Sabha on Monday. *—PTI*

With 'Bhasha Andolan,' Didi flays BJP over 'linguistic terror'

BOLPUR, 28 JULY

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday launched the 'Bhasha Andolan' (Language Movement) from Bolpur in Birbhum district, declaring that she would "give up her life, but not allow anyone to snatch her language".

She accused the Centre and the Election Commission of attempting to "implement the National Register of Citizens (NRC) through the backdoor" in the state by targeting Bengali-speaking migrants and making attempts to omit genuine voters from the electoral rolls.

"I won't allow the implementation of NRC or the building of detention camps in Bengal," she added.

The CM also directed officials to ensure that people are not harassed in the name of electoral roll revision. Chairing an administrative review meeting in Birbhum district, Banerjee announced that a dedicated scheme will be launched to assist the alleged persecuted Bengali migrants who have returned from other states amidst rising cases of harassment.

With a pic of Rabindranath Tagore, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee marches in Birbhum on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

Meanwhile, TMC MP Saket Gokhale said 1.26 crore voters have been "deleted" from Bihar's electoral rolls following the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise and challenged the government to a debate on the issue in Parliament.

—Agencies

Andhra govt cancels 2 Adani projects

AMRAVATI, 28 JULY

The Andhra Pradesh government has cancelled two Adani Green Energy Ltd's (AGEL) pumped hydro storage power projects (PSP)--1,200 MW Kurukutti and 1,000 MW Karrivalasa--at the request of the company due to "local issues."

A government orde noted that AGEL wrote to the government to cancel these projects due to boundary disputes between Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, which it termed "local issues".

The AGEL received permission to set up these two projects during the previous YSRCP government.

The feasibility reports for these projects were prepared by the New and Renewable Energy Development Corporation of Andhra Pradesh Ltd, while AGEL was to conduct the survey and investigations and the prepare a detailed project report. *—PTI*

CBI submits report on cash-for-query scam involving Moitra

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has submitted its report to the Lokpal regarding the alleged cash-for-query scandal involving Lok Sabha MP Mahua Moitra and businessman Darshan Hiranandani, officials said on Monday.

Officials reported that the CBI registered an FIR on 21 March last year, following a referral from the Lokpal, which included allegations against Moitra for corrupt practices like accepting bribes and abuse of her parliamentary privileges by sharing her Lok Sabha login credentials.

Moitra, who previously held the Krishnanagar seat, was expelled from the House in December 2023 for "unethical conduct," a decision she has contested in SC.

Despite these controversies, she recorded a convincing victory against BJP's Amrita Roy in 2024 polls, securing her position in the 18th Lok Sabha. The allegations were initially made by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey. *—PTI*

OVER HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Kerala nuns held in Ch'garh after Bajrang Dal stir

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

The police has arrested two Catholic nuns from Kerala's Assisi Sisters of Mary Immaculate (ASMI) along with man from the Durg Railway Station in Chattisgarh on charges of forced conversion and human trafficking. The trio were accompanying three girls, aged between 18 and 19 years.

The action was taken following a complaint by a local Bajrang Dal functionary, who accused the trio of forcibly converting the three girls from Chattisgarh's Narayanpur district and trafficking them.

The two nuns, Preeti Mary and Vandana Francis hail from Kerala, while Sukhman Mandav hails from Narayanpur.

Sisters Preeti Mary & Sister Vandana Francis arrested in Chhattisgarh after being falsely accused by Bajrang Dal mob **PHOTO: X**

Father Sebastian Poomattam, Vicar General of the Raipur Archdiocese said the nuns had been accompanying the women to place them in convents in Agra for domestic work.

He said that they were adults and had consent letter from their parents.

UDF MPs, including Congress general secretary KC Venugopal, staged a protest in the Parliament House complex on Monday over the arrests on 26 July and demanded their immediate release.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday claimed that two Catholic nuns were jailed in Chhattisgarh for their faith and alleged that a "systematic persecution" of minorities was taking place wherever the BJP was in power.

In Kerala, the ruling CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the Opposition UDF on Monday criticised the BJP over the arrest of the nuns. Kerala Assembly elections is due to be held by 2026.

—AGENCIES

SP MP slams BJP's selective outrage over cleric's remark

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Muslim cleric Maulana Sajid Rashid's remarks against Samajwadi Party MP Dimple Yadav during a debate sparked a row. Rashid allegedly described Yadav, who attended a mosque in a saree, in an inappropriate manner, contrasting her attire with that of another woman MP who had covered her head.

This prompted significant backlash on social media and condemnation from various political figures, including BJP's Bansuri Swaraj and Congress' Renuka Chowdhury. A police complaint has since led to Rashid being booked for inflammatory remarks deemed derogatory and provocative towards women. In response to the uproar,

Dimple Yadav expressed her appreciation for the solidarity against Rashid's comments but noted that such outrage would have been more impactful had it extended to the violence witnessed in Manipur for instance.

In a related development, Maulana Shahabuddin Razvi Barelvi requested the removal of Maulana Mohibbullah Nadvi, the mosque's imam, for allegedly allowing a political meeting to take place within the religious space while BJP's minority wing also called for Nadvi's disqualification.

—PTI

PHOTO: PTI

SC refuses to shift Ilaiyaraaja's copyright dispute

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

The Supreme Court of India rejected a request from renowned music composer Ilaiyaraaja to move a copyright dispute involving over 500 of his compositions from the Bombay High Court to the Madras High Court. The court dismissed the plea, following arguments from Sony Music Entertainment, which initiated the lawsuit in 2022 to prevent Ilaiyaraaja Music N Management Pvt Ltd from using 536 works. Sony asserted it held the rights through entities entangled in litigation with Ilaiyaraaja. 310 of the composer's disputed works are already under review in a separate g case in Madras, where Ilaiyaraaja is fighting for recognition of his rights established in a notable 2019 ruling. *—PTI*

Vehicle plunges into canal in Punjab; 6 dead

LUDHIANA, 28 JULY

Six people lost their lives after a pickup vehicle plunged into the Sirhind canal near Jagera Bridge in Ludhiana district, Punjab. The accident occurred on 27 July as over 25 devotees were returning from a visit to the Mata Naina Devi temple in Himachal Pradesh. The driver repotrtedly lost control while overtaking another vehicle at the canal's edge. The bodies of six devotees, including three women and two children, were recovered, while three others are missing, police said. Most of the passemgers were rescued during a prompt operation initiated that night, with Deputy Commissioner Himanshu Jain and Senior Superintendent of Police Jyoti Yadav present to oversee the efforts.*—PTI*

Baby loses five fingers; TN hosp, doc to compensate

CHENNAI, 28 JULY

The Chennai North District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission has ordered a hospital and a gynaecologist to pay Rs 23.65 lakh for treatment costs and an additional Rs 10 lakh after a 24-week-old baby lost all five fingers due to gangrene. The Commission found both the hospital and doctor negligent for failing to justify the emergency nature of a cervical pessary procedure performed without consent. The procedure, conducted while the mother was undergoing fertility treatment and 22 weeks pregnant, was unnecessary, leading to complications. The infant was kept in NICU, where early signs of gangrene were detected, resulting in the amputation of his right hand fingers. The Commission also ordered payment of Rs 10,000 towards legal costs.*—PTI*

Orphaned by floods: HP govt to fund baby's care

SHIMLA, 28 JULY

A 10-month-old girl named Neetika has been designated a "child of the state" following the loss of her parents and grandmother in devastating flash floods caused by a cloudburst in Himachal Pradesh's Mandi district. The tragedy struck Talwara village on 1 July, when Ramesh, 31, died while attempting to divert floodwater, and his wife Radha Devi, 24, and mother Purnu Devi, 59, remain missing. The Himachal Pradesh government, under the Chief Minister Sukh-Aashray Yojana, pledged to support Neetika's education and upbringing. The government would cover all costs related to her future aspirations, including higher education and skills training. Currently, Neetika is being cared for by her aunt.*—PTI*

SC raps cash-stash accused Justice Varma

Apex court fumes at the judge for challenging an in-house inquiry panel after it indicted him

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday grilled former Allahabad High Court's Justice Yashwant Varma for challenging findings of an in-house inquiry panel report against him over the incident of cash discovery from his official residence and asked how could he question it after participating in the process.

The in-house inquiry panel report indicted Justice Varma over the discovery of huge cache of burnt cash from his official residence during his tenure as a Delhi High Court judge.

The court asked Justice Varma why did he wait for the inquiry to be completed and the report be released.

The court asked senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing Justice Varma, why he had appeared before the inquiry panel.

Sibal said he appeared expecting the committee to find out the owner of the cash.

The plea does not reveal Justice Varma's identity and is titled, "XXX v. The Union of India".

The top court further quizzed him over the parties he had made in his plea and said he should have filed the in-house inquiry report with his plea.

Sibal submitted that a judge couldn't be a subject matter of public debate.

He submitted the inquiry committee report couldn't form the basis for the impeachment motion.

The bench, however, refused to look at anything not a part of the record. The matter was posted for 30 July.

Justice Varma has sought quashing of the former chief justice of India Sanjiv Khanna's recommendations, urging Parliament to initiate impeachment proceedings against him.

The petition contended that the inquiry panel findings were based on a preconceived narrative without affording him a full and fair hearing.

CJI Khanna wrote to President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi recommending the judge's impeachment. *—PTI*

The apex court asked Justice Varma why did he wait for the inquiry to be completed and the report be released *PHOTO: X*

- The court also asked advocate Kapil Sibal, representing Justice Varma, why he appeared before the inquiry panel

No apology to Col Qureshi yet: SC slams MP minister

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday pulled up Madhya Pradesh minister Kunwar Vijay Shah for not issuing a public apology over his remarks against Indian Army officer Col Sofiya Qureshi, saying he was testing the court's patience.

The court said the minister's conduct was making the court doubt his intentions and bonafide.

Shah's counsel said he had issued a public apology, which was online, and would be placed on court's record.

The bench asked the special investigation team constituted to probe the statements made by the minister to submit its report by 13 August.

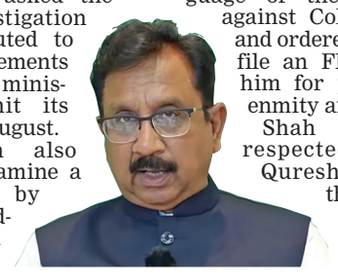
The bench also refused to examine a plea filed by Congress leader Jaya Thakur seeking Shah's resignation but said some of the allegations made would be probed.

The top court posted the hearing for 18 August.

Shah came under fire after a viral video showed him allegedly making objectionable remarks against Col Qureshi, who along with another woman officer, Wing Commander Vyomika Singh, had briefed the media on Operation Sindoor.

The Madhya Pradesh High Court rebuked Shah for passing "scurrilous" remarks and using "language of the gutters" against Col Qureshi, and ordered police to file an FIR against him for promoting enmity and hatred.

Shah said he respected Col Qureshi more than his sister *—PTI*



SC stays HC order on WB OBC list

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed the Calcutta High Court's decision that had stalled the implementation of a revised list of OBCs notified by the West Bengal government. The HC had ordered an interim stay on notifications issued by the state with regard to reservations to 140 subsections. *—PTI*

SC takes suo motu case over dog bites

The SC on Monday took suo motu cognisance of incidents of dog bites leading to rabies in Delhi and termed it "very disturbing and alarming". Every day, hundreds of dog bites are being reported in Delhi, leading to rabies. "Let this order be placed along with the news report before the CJI for appropriate orders," it said. *—PTI*

SC questions suicides in IITs, Noida university

NEW DELHI, 27 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday raised questions over the instances of suicides particularly at IIT Kharagpur besides Sharda University in Greater Noida directing the investigation in both cases to "proceed expeditiously".

The court was hearing a matter over suicide deaths at educational institutions.

In the suicide of a fourth year mechanical engineering student, the bench asked the IIT Kharagpur counsel on why students were committing suicides and what steps has the institute taken to prevent it.

Hearing a similar incident at Sharda University involving a female student, the bench ordered that investigations in both the cases be expedited.

Amicus curiae Aparna Bhat, said a suicide note was found naming two persons who were arrested. The victim's father had filed the FIR.

The court questioned who informed the father that his daughter had committed suicide.

The court observed in an unfortunate incident a young girl died.

IIT Kharagpur, which had lodged the complaint about its student's death, constituted a 10-member committee besides a 12-member counselling centre for students. The investigation into the incident was underway.

The bench posted the hearing after four weeks. SC took suo motu cognisance of the students' deaths in both these institutes. It set up a national task force to address mental health concerns of students. *—PTI*

Earth observation satellite launch on 30 July

CHENNAI, 28 JULY

The unique Earth observation satellite NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) will be launched through the GSLV-S16 on 30 July, said ISRO chairman V Narayanan.

Weighing 2,392 kg, NISAR is a unique Earth observation satellite and the first to observe the Earth with a dual-frequency Synthetic Aperture Radar (NASA's L-band and ISRO's S-band) both using NASA's 12m unfurlable mesh reflector antenna, integrated to ISRO's modified 13k satellite bus.

It will observe earth with a swath of 242 km and high spatial resolution, using SweepSAR technology for the first time, said ISRO. *—PTI*

Family members sit beside the injured people undergoing treatment at a hospital following a stampede at Avsaneshwar temple in Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

2 killed in 2nd stampede in two days

BARABANKI, 28 JULY

Two people were killed and 32 injured in a stampede at a the Avsaneshwar temple in Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki after a live electric wire, broken by monkeys, fell onto a tin shed early on Monday, officials said.

The incident occurred at the Avsaneshwar temple in the Haidergarh area during when devotees gathered for 'jalabhishek'. Barabanki District Magistrate Shashank Tripathi said that during the 'jalabhishek' ritual, monkeys had damaged an electric wire, which caused current to flow through three tin sheds in the temple complex, triggering panic and a stampede in the temple premises.

Prashant,22, from the Mubarakpura village under the Lonikatra police station area and another 30-year-old devotee succumbed to their injuries while undergoing treatment at the Trivediganj Community Health Centre (CHC), officials said.

A total of 10 injured persons were brought to Trivediganj CHC, of whom five were referred to higher medical centres due to their critical condition.

Meanwhile, 26 injured devotees are being treated at the Haidergarh CHC, and one of them has been referred for advanced care due to serious injuries. This comes a day after eight people were killed in a stampede that broke out during a rush of pilgrims along a stair route leading to the Mansa Devi temple in Haridwar. *—PTI*

IIM allows rape accused to enter class

KOLKATA, 28 JULY

The Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, (IIMC) authorities have decided to allow its student who was arrested on rape charge and is now out on bail to attend classes, an official said.

The academic council decided to allow the student – Paramanand Mahaveer Toppannawar,26, – to attend classes from 28 July. However, it was decided that he cannot stay in the campus hostel till the Kolkata Police SIT completes their investigation.

The academic council meeting took place on Friday, after the second-year student visited the campus to submit an application seeking the institute's nod to attend classes, the official said.

However, his another plea for staying in the same Lake View Hostel – where he had been earlier staying as a boarder and from where he was arrested – was turned down as it was a co-educational hostel and the probe was yet to be completed, the official said. Paramanand's plea for compensatory attendance will be considered later, the official said. *—PTI*

Paramanand Mahaveer Toppannawar is not allowed stay in the campus hostel till the SIT completes its investigation *PHOTO: PTI*

FLAWS IN FUND USE

India completes 85% of 4-yr afforestation target

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

India raised 1,78,261 hectares of compensatory afforestation against a target of 2,09,297 hectares between 2019-20 and 2023-24, achieving 85 per cent of the planned area, the Supreme Court-mandated Central Empowered Committee has said in a report.

The report filed by the empowered committee earlier this month revealed that the utilisation of funds under the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) varies sharply across states.

According to the report, Gujarat, Chandigarh, Mizoram and Madhya Pradesh recorded full achievement of their targets.

Madhya Pradesh planted 21,746.82 hectares, fully achieving its target of 21,107.68 hectares. Karnataka also met nearly its entire target, covering 2,761.26 hectares against 2,775.12 hectares. *—PTI*

PHOTO: AI

Dog gets residence certificate in Bihar

PATNA, 28 JULY

A residence certificate for a dog, dubbed 'Dog Babu', has caused embarrassment for local authorities in rural Patna, leading to an FIR against those involved. Issued last week, the certificate also listed the canine's parents as 'Kutta Babu' and 'Kutiya Devi'. The incident occurred during intensive electoral roll revisions in Bihar, as citizens sought various documents. Screenshots of the document circulated on social media, prompting criticism of the EC for not accepting Aadhaar and ration cards. *—PTI*

MANAGEMENT REJECTS CLAIM

Oxygen cut off; 3 die in Punjab hospital

CHANDIGARH, 28 JULY

Three patients died at the civil hospital in Punjab's Jalandhar on 27 July with their family members claiming they passed away because of a technical fault in oxygen supply at the trauma centre.

However, the hospital authorities rejected the claims but acknowledged that oxygen supply dipped a bit while asserting that the backup oxygen cylinders were made functional within no time.

A nine-member committee has been formed to investigate and submit a report within two days, medical superintendent of the hospital, Raj Kumar, said.

Among the patients, one was hospitalised with snake bite, the second was a drug overdose patient, while the third was suffering from tuberculosis. All three were put on ventilators. Speaking to reporters, senior medical officer, Vinay Anand said there was a technical fault because of which oxygen pressure dipped a little bit.

"But we had sufficient back up oxygen cylinders which were made functional within no time. Moreover, the technical fault at the main oxygen plant was also rectified during the same time," Anand said.

On the family members of the deceased blaming faulty oxygen supply behind the deaths, Anand said the claims were not correct. Asked what caused the deaths, he said, "The reasons have been mentioned by the doctors in the patients' files."The family members, though, claimed that the patients died after oxygen supply was snapped at the hospital. *—PTI*

A nine-member committee has been formed to investigate and submit a report within two days *PHOTO: ANI*

Monsoon rains 7% above normal; uneven in states

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

India has witnessed a 7 per cent rise in monsoon rainfall since 1 June, totalling 447.8mm compared to the normal of 418.9mm, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

However, rainfall distribution has varied across states. Rajasthan, Ladakh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Sikkim recorded "large excess" rainfall, with Rajasthan alone receiving 384.7mm—92 per cent above normal levels.

Regions such as Arunachal Pradesh and Bihar experienced significant shortfalls. The IMD had initially predicted 106 per cent of the long-period average rainfall for the season.

The Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority has issued a flood alert for areas near the Godavari River, advising caution for residents close to the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers, while Imphal faced considerable waterlogging due to heavy rains in the last few days. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Telangana's caste survey is called the model, but ours will be the best: Madhusudan Naik

SALAR ? UPCLOSE

NAHEED ATAULLA

Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes will commence the socio-educational re-survey from 22 September to 7 October. The Karnataka government notified a fresh socio-educational survey after keeping aside the one done by commission's former chairman H Kantharaj in 2015 and analysed by his successor K Jayaprakash Hegde in 2024, on the grounds that the data was a decade old and decisions by the courts require contemporaneous/recent origin. Commission Chairman Madhusudan R Naik in a conversation with ***Salar News*** outlines modalities of the survey.

From the proposed 90 days, the socio-educational survey has been crunched to 15 days now. Is a fortnight adequate to survey a population of seven crore?

That's a misconception. We were given a window of 90 days to conduct our survey. The 90 days is when the government makes an order. The survey which we are expected to make involves several things other than preparations at the ground level. This requires preparing the questionnaire and identifying who should do the survey which takes about a month and a half. We have decided the Dasara vacations as the time when the actual fieldwork can be done. Factoring in that, we have started our process, which started much earlier immediately after the cabinet decision on 12 June.

The survey will be conducted from 22 September to 7 October, when the educational institutions will be closed for Dasara. It is a vacation given to celebrate Dasara which is a state festival with people planning for short holidays. Can you ensure a 100 per cent fool proof enumeration?

The actual survey will start from 22 September to 7 October, that's when the teachers are on vacation. The whole idea is that a survey should not affect the teaching programme because that is the mandate by the orders of the court. It says you should not take away teaching from the teachers for any kind of work of enumeration even for the census. Earlier surveys conducted were physical but that won't be anymore. We have the benefit of advancement in technology and will be using devices which captures the entire data and automatically transmits it to the main server.

There's an estimated household of 1.35 lakh consisting of about seven crore population in the state. Our task is to survey every household and every resident of Karnataka. Hopefully, a surveyor should be able to survey about 8 to 12 households which will involve about 30 to 40 minutes, and given the time frame we should be able to complete that survey.

We are trying to design a survey which would be pre-notified even before the actual work starts. We will allow online surveys as well.

People who are planning to go out, those who are not likely to be there, to facilitate them—we have also thought of providing an online survey option where they go to the particular website and participate in this survey work. Even thereafter, if somebody misses, we have provided means to contact them. We'll be involving clusters or welfare associations in cities like Bengaluru where there are apartment complexes.

Why was there a lukewarm response from Bengaluru to both the H Kantharaj caste survey and the recent Justice HN Nagamohan Das commission to decide on internal reservations for the Scheduled Castes?

The Commissions did have some problems in places like Bengaluru during the previous surveys. There was some kind of reluctance or doubts in participating. People were under the impression that it is not for their benefit. The impression was that if the government is surveying for Scheduled Castes to determine some issues between them, why should we be volunteering and participating in this kind of a survey?

Our survey does not involve only identifying the backward classes but covers social, educational, economic, political and employment status of the entire residents of the state.

Now you may ask why is this data required? The government uses this data in formulation of its policy. Several welfare measures are taken by the government — not necessarily confined to sections of the society but across.

Teachers have opposed the decision to enlist them as enumerators stating it violates the Right To Education (RTE) Act provisions that their services cannot be used for purposes other than teaching. How do you plan to tackle this issue?

The Right to Education Act is for the betterment of education to the children of a particular age group — 6 to 16 years. We will ensure that not a day or a moment of the teaching program of the students is affected.

The teachers who have opposed this are under the misconception that RTE is for protection of their rights but court orders have said they are for the students' interests. They are the employees of the state and I'm not saying in any disrespectful manner, (but) the teachers are there to do the service to the state and owe a duty to the society.

The commission has evolved a proposal, a package, which is fairly attractive for them. We are not ignoring their deprivation of their vacation. The teachers' vacation will only get deferred. We will convert the days for which they work into earned leave and that earned leave can either be encashed or availed in future. The package is under consultation before the government.

I'm sure once they realise the package which is proposed it should clear their doubts and we should be able to persuade the teachers to join us in this.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has asked the Commission to study the socio, economic, political, and educational survey which was done by the Telangana government, which is now considered as the role model for all caste surveys to be done in the future. So, what was Telangana's USP — the unique selling proposition?

Our state's Backward Classes Act provides for assessing the social and educational status of the citizens for giving the benefits under Articles 15 and 16 (of the Constitution). The Supreme Court has held every factor of the backwardness -- social, educational, and financial should be assessed.

As far as Telangana is concerned, they did not do it under the provisions of the Backward Classes Commission Act of their state. The survey done by the Planning Authority of the state included aspects of employment, political representation and requirements for good governance. Our secretary is visiting Telangana on 28 July, to find out what else, or how best, they have done it. If there's something to be incorporated, we will do so.

You can be rest assured, our survey will be the model in terms of what is being referred to as the Telangana model. Our data will be available to the government for budgeting, for initiating numerous other issues which go into decision-making and the furtherance of good governance.

Will the results of the Centre's caste enumeration, that has been included in the population census to begin in 2026, override the report of the Karnataka Commission's?

That's a misconception actually. Under the Census Act of 1948, there's no provision for a caste survey. The government can amend the Act and include caste enumeration. The Central government is now planning to invoke Articles 338, 339 and 340 (which empower the President to appoint a Commission to investigate the social and educational conditions of the SCs/STs and backward classes respectively) to include caste enumeration in the population census. Therefore, it's altogether a different work to be done by the census authorities and the survey by the state authority.

This question arose in 1996 in Uttar Pradesh and in Karnataka in 2015, when there were two lists of the Centre and states. The Supreme court has given full authority to states to prepare their lists. Hence there is no conflict and nothing overrides the other.

What is the status of the case pending in the Supreme Court pertaining to the (Basavaraj) Bommai government scrapping the 4 per cent OBC reservation for the Muslims in 2023? Has the Commission taken any steps to get the case vacated as the Bommai government had assured the apex court that the decision will not be implemented after the court called it "`prima facie shaky and flawed?"

I don't have details of the case. The matter is still pending in the court, after the Bommai government gave an undertaking it will abide by the order of 2002. Regarding the scrapping of the 4 per cent reservation, the Muslims were in a particular category and they were pushed down with a limited reservation. I'm sure the government will bring it to the Supreme Court's notice that all this was unnecessary once fresh data is available.

Reports of all backward classes commissions in the past, from LG Havanur to Venkataswamy to O Chinnappa Reddy to H Kantharaj, were mired in controversies and some rejected. Will these precedents be a deterrent or a challenge to the Commission that yours will be accepted?

Accepting the report or otherwise is left to the government. But since our survey work and the recommendations based on that would be very scientifically evolved, taking note of all the issues that had cropped in the past - court pronouncements and the statutes in the Constitution---, our report is going to be a fair one to be accepted by everybody. I don't see any difficulty in that.

The only issue that disturbs me is that from the beginning there was a recommendation to confine the benefits to all other than the creamy layer.

Therefore, certain sections who are termed as the creamy layer in earlier reports had recommended not to accept the reports for political reasons. Our report will be data based and I`m sure the government will take it in the right manner.

(I am) confident it will happen. —*Salar News*

> **Teachers who are opposed to (the government) using their services for enumeration are under the misconception that RTE is for the protection of their rights, but court orders have said the it is for the students' interests. Teacher are the employees of the state and I'm not saying it in any disrespectful manner (but) the teachers are there to serve the state and owe a duty to the society**
>
> **—Madhusudan R Naik,** Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes Chairman

State Commission for Backward Classes will conduct the socio-educational re-survey, popularly known as the 'caste census', from 22 September to 7 October ***PHOTO: PTI***

WATCH FULL INTERVIEW

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Why has one man's confession caused a stir in Dharmasthala ?

The confessions of a man who spent decades working at Dharmasthala, a famous pilgrimage centre in Karnataka, have unveiled a scandal involving allegations of hundreds of murders and rapes.

On 3 July, the former sanitation worker made a statement to police.

"I am filing this complaint with an extremely heavy heart and to recover from an insurmountable sense of guilt ... I can no longer bear the burden of memories of the murders I witnessed, the continuous death threats to bury the corpses I received, and the pain of beatings — that if I did not bury those corpses, I would be buried alongside them," the statement said.

The man, who belongs to the Dalit community, said he worked at the Dharmasthala temple between 1995 and 2014.

He said he carried out much of his daily cleaning duties near the Nethravathi River, which flows close to the Dharmasthala temple—until things took a dark turn.

In his complaint the man said he started to "notice dead bodies appearing" near the river.

"Among them, women's bodies were more numerous," the report stated.

It was not immediately made clear how the bodies arrived where the man found them.

The man initially thought the bodies were the tragic results of suicide and drowning. However, he soon realised he was mistaken.

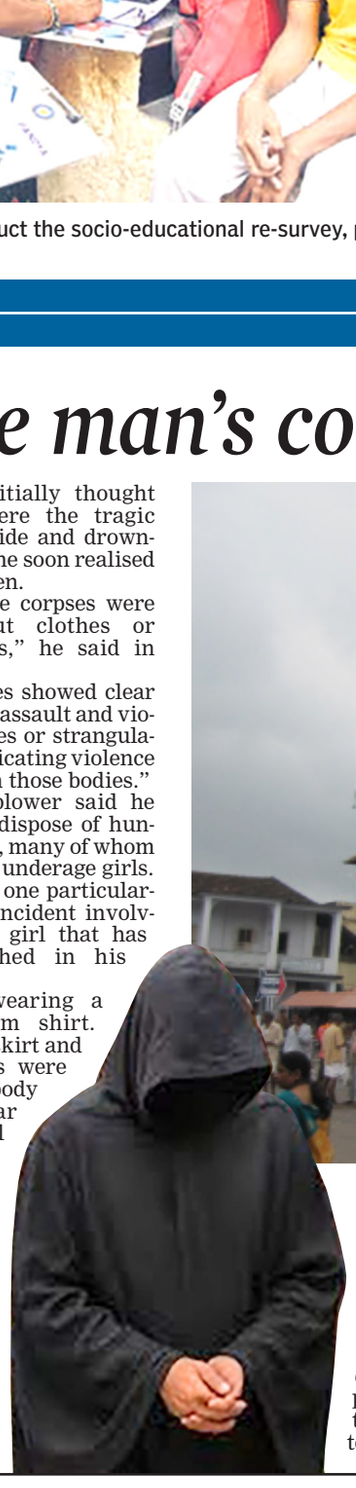
"Many female corpses were found without clothes or undergarments," he said in his statement.

"Some corpses showed clear signs of sexual assault and violence — injuries or strangulation marks indicating violence were visible on those bodies."

The whistleblower said he was forced to dispose of hundreds of bodies, many of whom appeared to be underage girls.

He described one particularly disturbing incident involving a teenage girl that has remained etched in his memory.

"She was wearing a school uniform shirt. However, her skirt and undergarments were missing. Her body showed clear signs of sexual assault," according to his complaint. "There were strangulation marks on her neck. They instructed me to dig a pit and bury her along with her school bag."



Sri Manjunatha Temple in Dharmasthala; The complainant has been cloaked to protect his identity ***PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA***

The man also wrote about "extremely cruel" murders that took place in the town near the temple.

"Poor and destitute men who came for begging in the Dharmasthala area were systematically murdered ... They would be tied to chairs in rooms and suffocated from behind using towels. These murders took place in my presence," he alleged.

Without identifying anyone, the complainant alleged that his temple supervisors did not report the cases to authorities. Instead, he claimed that they beat him up and forced him to "to secretly dispose of these bodies."

He alleged that his supervisor threatened him by saying: "We will cut you into pieces; your body will also be buried like the other corpses. We will sacrifice all your family members."

The man described how he escaped from Dharmasthala in 2014 after a girl in his family was allegedly sexually harassed by a person thought to be connected to the temple supervisors.

He said he wanted the perpetrators of the crimes to be held accountable, adding that he would help exhume the victims' bodies so they could receive "proper respect and funeral rites."

On 22 July, the Karnataka government formed a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the allegations against the temple authorities.

It came after S Balan, a senior lawyer and human rights activist, led a delegation of lawyers to meet Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. "There will be judicial intervention, but it all depends on public outcry," Balan said.

The fresh revelations have prompted family members of girls in Dharmasthala who went missing or died under mysterious circumstances to request the reopening of unresolved cases — some of which date back to the 1980s.

The family of a 17-year-old girl who was allegedly raped and murdered in 2012 has asked the government to investigate their daughter's case under the SIT.

Sujatha Bhat, a former stenographer for the Central Bureau of Investigations whose daughter mysteriously disappeared in 2003, has also filed a fresh complaint with the police.

"There are at least 367 such cases of missing or dead people in Dharmasthala," said lawyer Balan.

A spokesperson for Dharmasthala, K Parshwanath Jain, said that the temple administration supported a "fair and transparent investigation."

"A case was recently registered at the Dharmasthala police station claiming that several dead bodies were buried, which has sparked widespread debate, speculation, and confusion at the national level," he said in a statement.

In order to provide evidence for his claims, the former sanitation worker said he recently exhumed skeletal remains from one of the burial sites and submitted photographs to authorities.

Ojaswi Gowda, the lawyer representing the complainant, said that "the Dharmasthala police could have visited the site where the complainant has claimed to bury the bodies, but it has even failed to do so." —*DW NEWS*

PHOTO: AP

UK offers military support to Taiwan against China

LONDON, 28 JULY

British Defence Secretary John Healey has stated that the UK is prepared to combat alongside allies, including Australia, if tensions over Taiwan escalate into conflict. Speaking in response to a question about Britain's potential support for Taiwan, Healey said, "If we have to fight, as we have done in the past, Australia and the UK are nations that will fight together." He later clarified that his remarks were made in "general terms," emphasising a preference for peaceful resolutions in the Indo-Pacific. His comments follow heightened global concerns over Chinese military activities near Taiwan. The Taiwanese Ministry of Defence recently reported four sorties of People's Liberation Army aircraft and 10 naval vessels operating near its territory. *—ANI*

Seven killed in Pak during protest over minor girl's death

KHYBER, 28 JULY

A protest in the Tirah region following the death of a minor girl turned deadly, claiming at least seven lives on Sunday. Tribesmen carried the girl's body – allegedly killed in a mortar attack in the Darbar area of Peer Mela – to an army camp in Bagh-Maidan. Eyewitnesses sad the situation escalated when some protesters disregarded pleas for calm and torched an excavator and attempted to breach the camp's gates. In response, security personnel opened fire, leading to six fatalities on site, with another victim succumbing to injuries later. Injured individuals were rushed to local hospitals, with one in critical condition. Following discussions between tribal elders and security officials, assurances of support and financial compensation were made. *—ANI*

Four more die in Turkey wildfires, toll rises to 17

ISTANBUL, 28 JULY

The death toll from wildfires near Bursa in northwest Turkey has risen to four after two volunteer firefighters succumbed to injuries in hospital on Sunday. They were part of a crew responding to a blaze when their water tanker rolled over. Earlier, another worker died at the scene, and a firefighter died from a heart attack during the incidents. The fatalities bring the total number related to wildfires in Turkey to 17 since late June. Over the weekend, devastating fires forced more than 3,500 residents to evacuate their homes as high temperatures and strong winds exacerbated the situation. Forest Minister Ibrahim Yumakli said at least 44 fires were active Sunday. *—PTI*

Starmer presses Trump to facilitate a Gaza ceasefire

US Prez flays Bibi for denying existence of a hunger crisis

EDINBURGH, 28 JULY

US President Donald Trump met on Monday at one of his Scottish golf courses with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, who pressed him on the US taking a larger role in helping quell a growing food crisis in Gaza amid Israel's ongoing war with Hamas in the territory.

Starmer and his wife, Victoria, arrived at Trump's Turnberry course on the southern coast, and the Republican President spent several minutes chatting with them and proudly pointing out key aspects of the property. But the Prime Minister didn't wait until they were inside to insist that Gaza would be a key topic in their meeting, calling what's occurring there "a desperate situation."

Trump was asked if he agreed with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's denying a mass starvation in Gaza being overstated and replied, "I don't know. I mean, based on television, I would say not particularly because those children look very hungry."

Starmer was far more forceful: "I think people in Britain are revolted at seeing what they are seeing on their screens."

Trump said Israel "has a lot of responsibility" for what's happening but said the country is hampered by considerations of the remaining hostages it wants to see kept alive and freed. "I think Israel can do a lot".

"We've got to get that ceasefire,"Starmer added.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, US President Donald Trump and Starmer's wife Victoria in Turnberry, Scotland on Monday PHOTO: PTI

TIGHTENS DEADLINE FOR PUTIN

Trump said he intends to shorten the 50-day deadline he gave Russian President Vladimir Putin to reach a deal that ends the three-year war in Ukraine.

His announcement came as Russia fired an overnight barrage at Ukraine of more than 300 drones, four cruise missiles and three ballistic missiles, the Ukrainian air force said.

Trump said two weeks ago he would implement "severe tariffs" on Russia unless a peace deal is reached by early September, as he expressed exasperation with Putin over the bombardment of Ukrainian cities amid the Republican president's attempts to stop the fighting.

Trump said he would give Putin 10 to 12 days from Monday, meaning he wants peace efforts to make progress by 7-9 August. The plan includes possible sanctions and secondary tariffs targeting Russia's trading partners. *—PTI*

US, China to talk trade in Stockholm

WASHINGTON, 28 JULY

Top US and Chinese officials are set to meet in Stockholm on Monday to discuss trade and tariffs while likely working towards a meting between their Presidents later this year.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng are set to hold talks for the third time this year, nearly four months after President Donald Trump upset global trade with his sweeping tariff proposal, including an import tax that shot up to 145 per cent on Chinese goods.

"We have the confines of a deal with China," Trump said Friday before leaving for Scotland.

Bessent told MSNBC on Wednesday that the two countries after talks in Geneva and London have reached a "status quo," with the US taxing Chinese imports at 30 per cent and China responding with a 10 per cent tariff, on top of the tariffs existed before the start of Trump's second term. *—Agencies*

B'DESH ORDERS 25 BOEING JETS TO WOO TRUMP

Bangladesh has reportedly ordered 25 aircrafts from Boeing and stepped up its imports of American goods in an effort to defuse the trade tensions and lower the steep Trump tariffs. US has threatened Bangladesh with a 35 per cent tariff hike, which pressurises the dominance of the Dhaka's garment industry exports. "We need new aircraft urgently, possibly within the next couple of years," Bangladesh Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman said. "Initially, it was 14 planes — now it's 25". *—Agencies*

ASEAN BROKERS CALM

Malaysia's Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, flanked by Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Manet (left) and Thailands acting Prime Minister Phumtham Weckayachai pose for photos after talks on a ceasefire between Thailand and Cambodia in Putrajaya, Malaysia, on Monday PHOTO: PTI

Thailand, Cambodia agree on immediate pause to clashes

PUTRAJAYA, 28 JULY

Thailand and Cambodia have agreed on an "immediate and unconditional" ceasefire from midnight to resolve deadly border clashes, Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said Monday.

Anwar, who chaired the talks as head of the ASEAN regional bloc, said both sides have reached a common understanding to take steps to return to normalcy.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet and Thai Acting Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai have agreed to "an immediate and unconditional ceasefire with effect from... midnight of 28 July," Anwar said as he read out a joint statement.

Hun Manet and Phuntam hailed the outcome of the meeting and shook hands at the conclusion of the brief press conference.

Military and officials from both sides will also hold meetings to defuse border tensions, he said. The foreign and defence ministers of Malaysia, Cambodia and Thailand have been instructed to "develop a detailed mechanism" to implement and monitor the ceasefire to ensure sustained peace, he added.

Earlier, US President Donald Trump said that a peace deal between the Southeast Asian nations, was "an easy one," compared to recent India-Pakistan conflict.

Trump had earlier tried negotiating a ceasefire between the nations by leveraging trade, but the impacts of that effort were not immediately clear.

Both sides blamed each other for starting the clashes, that have killed at least 35 people and displaced more than 260,000 people on both sides. *—PTI*

Humanitarian aid being airdropped to Palestinians over northern Gaza Strip on Sunday PHOTO: PTI

Israel kills 34 in Gaza, including 7 aid seekers

DEIR AL-BALAH, 28 JULY

Israeli strikes killed at least 34 Palestinians in multiple locations across Gaza on Monday, local health officials said, a day after Israel eased aid restrictions in the face of a worsening humanitarian crisis in the territory. This comes a day after Israel announced that the military would pause operations in Gaza City, Deir al-Balah and Muwasi for 10 hours a day to allow for the improved flow of aid.

The strikes occurred outside the time frame for the pause Israel declared would be held between 10am and 8pm.

The Awda hospital in central Gaza said it received the bodies of seven Palestinians who it said were killed Monday by Israeli fire close to an aid distribution site run by the US-and Israeli-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation. The hospital said 20 others were wounded close to the site.

> **Aid must be permitted to reach people in Gaza. There is no justification for keeping food and water away from civilian families**
>
> —Barrack Obama, former US president

Meanwhile, US President Donald Trump on Sunday called the images of emaciated and malnourished children in Gaza "terrible." He also accused Hamas of stealing food, without providing evidence. *—PTI with agencies*

HOUTHIS VOW TO TARGET ALL SHIPS LINKED TO ISRAEL

SANAA, 28 JULY

Yemen's Houthi group has announced that it will begin targeting any ship that does business with Israel, regardless of the company's nationality or destination, The Jerusalem Post reported on Monday.

The group said it was expanding its military operations in support of Palestinians and warned shipping companies to stop cooperating with Israeli ports if they wanted to avoid being targeted.

"All countries that want to avoid escalation must pressure the enemy to stop its attacks and lift the blockade on Gaza," the Houthis said in a statement, adding, "There is no free person on this earth who can accept what is happening."

The statement said the current conditions faced by Palestinians would be "unacceptable to any human being, let alone Arabs and Muslims."

"The actions of the Yemeni Armed Forces express our moral and humanitarian commitment to the injustice against the brotherly Palestinian people," the statement added. "All our military operations will stop immediately once the aggression on Gaza ends and the blockade is lifted." *—ANI*

Members of the Chinese People's Armed Police Force clean up silt on a road in Miyun District, north of Beijing, on Monday PHOTO: PTI

Heavy rains in China kill 4, several missing

HONG KONG/BEIJING, 28 JULY

Flooding and landslides in China worsened on Monday due to swollen rivers, waterways, and reservoirs across the country. This resulted in the death of at least four people, while authorities have warned of intense rainfall and subsequent disaster risks in the coming days.

China's Ministry of Water Resources on Sunday activated a Level 4 emergency response for flood control in Beijing, Xinhua reported.

According to reports, 41 rivers across China have flooded, and flood warnings have been issued.

On Monday, heavy rains in Beijing and surrounding areas intensified. In northern Hebei, four people were killed in a landslide, and eight others were reported missing. In Beijing's suburban Miyun district, more than 4,400 people were relocated after flash floods and landslides submerged many villages.

In Xilingol League and cities of Ordos and Ulanqab, more than 22,000 people have been relocated. In Fuping County, Baoding City of Hebei, two were killed and two others missing due to the latest round of heavy rainfall starting Friday. *—Agencies*

Bangladesh govt forms panel to probe jet crash

DHAKA, 28 JULY

The Bangladesh government has formed a nine-member commission to investigate last week's crash of its Air Force training jet into a school here that killed 34 people, mostly students, according to a media report.

The F-7 BGI aircraft experienced a "mechanical fault" moments after takeoff and crashed into a two-storey building of Milestone School and College in Dhaka's Uttara area on last Monday.

The probe commission headed by former secretary AKM Zafar Ullah Khan has been asked to submit its report within four weeks, The Daily Star newspaper cited a Cabinet Division gazette issued on Sunday.

The probe commission will examine the cause of the tragic crash, assess the loss of lives and injuries suffered by the victims and determine the extent of all damages.

It will also make suggestions on the operation of training aircraft, the construction of buildings in flying zones, and emergency response protocols during catastrophic events.

The Bangladesh Air Force has already formed a high-level investigation committee to determine the cause of the accident. *—PTI*

Five Indians in top 50 for in Global Student Prize 2025

LONDON, 28 JULY

Five Indian students have been named among the 50 finalists for the prestigious Chegg.org Global Student Prize 2025, which offers a USD 100,000 award for impactful efforts in learning and society. The finalists were chosen from nearly 11,000 nominations across 148 countries. The shortlisted students include Adarsh Kumar and Mannat Samra from Jayshree Periwal International School, Jaipur; Dhiraj Gatmane from Maharashtra; Jahaan Arora from The International School, Bangalore; and Shivansh Gupta from Heritage International Xperiential School, Delhi NCR. The top 10 finalists will be revealed next month, with the overall winner announced later in the year. Chegg's Nathan Schultz commended the finalists for their commitment to tackling pressing global challenges. *—PTI*

OVER 'BLIND TRUST' IN US

Kim's sister rejects outreach by S Korea's new President

SEOUL, 28 JULY

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's influential sister rebuffed overtures by South Koreas new liberal government, saying that its blind trust in the US and hostility towards Pyongyang make it no different from its conservative predecessor.

"We clarify the official stand that no matter what policy is adopted and whatever proposal is made in Seoul, we have no interest in it and there is neither a reason to meet nor an issue to be discussed," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement carried by state media.

It's North Korea's first official statement on the government of South Korean President Lee Jae Myung, which took office in early June with a promise to improve badly frayed ties with North Korea.

Kim Yo Jong PHOTO: X

Kim Yo Jong's comments imply that North Korea - expanding cooperation with Russia - sees no need to resume diplomacy with South Korea and the US anytime soon. Experts say she likely hopes to drive a wedge between Seoul and Washington.

Lee's government has halted anti-Pyongyang frontline loudspeaker broadcasts, taken steps to ban activists from flying balloons with propaganda leaflets across the border and repatriated North Koreans who were drifted south in wooden boats months earlier.

Kim Yo Jong called Lee's steps "sincere efforts" to develop ties, but said the new government still plots to "stand in confrontation" with the North. She mentioned the upcoming summertime South Korea-US military drills, which North Korea views as an invasion rehearsal.

North Korea has shunned talks with South Korea and the US since Kim Jong Un's high-stakes nuclear diplomacy with President Donald Trump fell apart in 2019 due to wrangling over international sanctions. *—PTI*

Gunman kills six in Bangkok food market, kills self

BANGKOK, 28 JULY

A gunman shot dead six people at a food market in the Thai capital on Monday before committing suicide, according to media reports.

The dead included four security guards, the Bangkok Post newspaper reported, and two women sustained injuries.

The incident occurred at 12.38pm at the Or Tor Kor market, known for high-quality fresh fruit and seafood.

The gunman was found dead on a bench inside the market building, dressed in a black T-shirt and camouflage shorts, the report quoted police as saying.

Police recovered an ID card and a driving licence identifying the deceased as Noi Praidaen, a 61-year-old man from Khong district, Nakhon Ratchasima.

Police said officers are investigating the motive behind the attack. *—PTI*

Man screams 'death to Trump' on UK flight

GLASSGOW, 28 JULY

An EasyJet flight from England to Scotland was diverted and a man was arrested on Sunday after a passenger made a bomb threat, shouting "death to Trump".

In a video going viral on social media, the middle-aged man can be seen shouting "Allahu Akbar".

In the video purportedly being shared in social media platforms, the man is seen standing in the flight's aisle, threatening to bomb and shouting "death to America" and "death to Trump". Eventually, startled passengers tackle him and restrain him successfully.

The diverted EasyJet flight from England's Luton landed at the Glasgow Airport, from where the man was taken into custody.

Coincidentally, the incident took place when US President Donald Trump was visiting Scotland.

A video going viral on social media shows the man shouting on the plane PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

In a similar incident last month, an Indian origin man aged 21 was arrested in Miami after allegedly attacking fellow passengers on Frontier Airlines flight according to reports. *—Agencies*

PHOTO: PTI

Gold Falls ₹500 to ₹98,020 per 10 grams

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Gold prices declined for the fourth straight session, falling Rs 500 to Rs 98,020 per 10 grams in Delhi on Monday, amid selling by stockists following a US-EU trade deal that dampened safe-haven demand. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity dropped Rs 500 to Rs 97,750 per 10 grams, while 99.9 per cent purity fell Rs 600 to Rs 98,520 on Saturday. Silver also plunged Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,13,000 per kilogram. Globally, spot gold and silver traded flat at USD 3,337.95 and USD 38.17 per ounce, respectively. Analysts cited a stronger US dollar and easing tariff concerns after the US-EU deal, similar to a recent US-Japan pact. Markets now await key US macroeconomic data, including jobless claims and Q2 GDP figures. *—PTI*

Rupee ends lower at 86.67 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 28 JULY

The rupee pared early gains and settled 15 paise lower at 86.67 against the US dollar on Monday, weighed by month-end dollar demand from importers and a weak trend in domestic equities. Traders remained cautious ahead of the August 1 India-US trade talks deadline and upcoming monetary policy decisions from the US Federal Reserve and Bank of Japan. The rupee opened at 86.47, touched a high of 86.40 and a low of 86.67. On Friday, it closed at 86.52. Analysts cited foreign fund outflows and a stronger dollar, bolstered by an EU-US trade deal, as key pressure points. Sensex fell 572 points to 80,891; Nifty dropped 156 points to 24,680. FIIs sold equities worth Rs 1,979.96 crore. India's forex reserves dipped by USD 1.183 billion to USD 695.489 billion. *—PTI*

Crisil pegs India Inc's Q1 growth at 4–6 per cent

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

The revenue growth of India's corporate sector in the first quarter of this fiscal year is estimated at a modest 4–6 per cent, down from about 7 per cent in the previous two quarters, due to sluggish performance by power, IT services and steel sectors, according to Crisil Intelligence. The power, coal, IT services and steel sectors collectively account for a third of the revenue of over 600 companies analysed, it said in a statement. Five sectors – pharmaceuticals, telecom services, organised retail, aluminium and airline – likely drove Q1 revenue growth for India Inc, it added. "The early onset of monsoon and lingering geopolitical uncertainties are expected to have materially impacted some sectors," Crisil Intelligence Director Pushan Sharma said. *—PTI*

Omaxe raises ₹431 cr through debentures

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Realty firm Omaxe Ltd has raised Rs 431 crore through the issue of debentures on a private placement basis for business growth. In a regulatory filing on Monday, the company informed that its subsidiary – Omaxe New Chandigarh Developers Pvt Ltd – has raised Rs 431 crore by issuance and allotment of 43,100 Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs) of face value Rs 1 lakh each through private placement. Recently, Omaxe announced an acquisition of a 450-acre land parcel in Indore to develop a Rs 1,200 crore township. Omaxe, country's one of the leading real estate firms, has a presence in 30 cities across eight states of North and Central India. It has delivered more than 135 million sq ft of area since inception. *—PTI*

The Bear is back: Sensex falls by 572pts, Nifty 156pts

Mkts were dragged by Kotak shares, which plunged by 7%

MUMBAI, 28 JULY

PHOTO: AI

Indian equity markets declined for the third straight session on Monday, with the BSE Sensex plunging 572 points and Nifty falling 156 points amid selling pressure in Kotak Mahindra Bank, persistent FII outflows, and uncertainty over the India-US trade deal.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 572.07 points or 0.70 per cent to close at 80,891.02, marking its lowest level since 4 June.

During the day, it slumped as much as 686.65 points. The broader NSE Nifty shed 156.10 points or 0.63 per cent to end at 24,680.90, also a near two-month low.

Over the past three sessions, Sensex has lost 1,835 points (2.2 per cent), while Nifty has dropped over 539 points (2 per cent).

Kotak Mahindra Bank was the biggest Sensex laggard, plunging 7.5 per cent after reporting a sharp drop in Q1 net profit to Rs 4,472 crore due to stress in its retail vehicle loan segment. Last year's profit was inflated by a one-time gain from a stake sale.

Other major losers included Bajaj Finance (-3.64 per cent), Bharti Airtel (-2.35 per cent), TCS (-1.76 per cent), Titan, HCL Tech, and SBI. TCS declined amid reports of over 12,000 layoffs, prompting scrutiny from the IT Ministry.

Gainers included Hindustan Unilever, Asian Paints, ICICI Bank, Power Grid, HDFC Bank, and ITC.

"The market remained under pressure due to weak Q1 earnings, trade deal delays, and continued FII selling," said Vinod Nair of Geojit Financial. Global markets were broadly positive on easing US-EU trade tensions.

BSE smallcap and midcap indices fell 1.31 per cent and 0.73 per cent, respectively. Realty, telecom, and capital goods led sectoral declines. FMCG and utilities were among the few gainers.

FIIs sold shares worth Rs 1,979.96 crore on Friday.

The rupee fell 15 paise to 86.67/USD, while Brent crude rose 0.91 per cent to USD 69.05 per barrel. *—PTI*

PHOTO: TATA

Layoff plans bring down TCS shares

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Shares of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) declined nearly two per cent on Monday after the company announced that it will lay off about 12,000 employees of its global workforce this year.

The stock dipped 1.69 per cent to Rs 3,081.20 on the BSE. At the NSE, it went lower by 1.7 per cent to Rs 3,081.60.

India's largest IT services firm TCS is set to lay off about 2 per cent, or 12,261 employees, of its global workforce this year, with the majority of those impacted belonging to middle and senior grades.

As of 30 June, 2025, TCS's workforce stood at 6,13,069. It increased its workforce by 5,000 in the recently concluded June quarter.

The move is part of the company's broader strategy to become a "future-ready organisation", focusing on investments in technology, AI deployment, market expansion, and workforce realignment, TCS said in a statement.

"Towards this, a number of reskilling and redeployment initiatives were underway. As part of this journey, we will also be releasing associates from the organisation whose deployment may not be feasible. This will impact about 2 per cent of our global workforce, primarily in the middle and the senior grades, over the course of the year," it said.

LAYOFFS UNDER WATCH

Meanwhile, the IT Ministry is keeping a close watch on the developments after the TCS's decision to lay off employees. Employment growth remains a key priority, with sharp focus on how initiatives like Employment Linked Incentive can help boost job creation, sources said. *—PTI*

Starlink connections cannot cross 20L: Telecom ministry

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

US Billionaire Elon Musk-led satellite communication services provider Starlink can have only 20 lakh connections in India offering 200 Mbps speeds, Union Minister Pemmasani Chandra Sekhar said on Monday, playing down the threat to state-run BSNL and other telecom players.

"Starlink can have only 20 lakh customers in India and offer up to 200 Mbps speed. That won't affect telecom services," the Minister of State for Telecom said on the sidelines of a review meeting of BSNL.

Satcom services are expected to target rural and remote areas where BSNL is known to have a significant presence. He said the upfront cost for satcom services will be too high, and the monthly cost may be around Rs 3,000.

However, the service comes an upfront hardware or terminal cost of around Rs 30,000, making it an unlikely competitor to terrestrial telecom operators such as Reliance Jio, Airtel and BSNL.

The minister said that the BSNL 4G rollout is complete, and it does not plan to increase tariffs as of now. "We want market first. There are no tariff hikes planned."

"Even if the demand exists, supply is constrained. Starlink can't service everyone. For example, Delhi might get only around 50,000 to 60,000 connections at best," the official added, ruling out mass market potential.

No telecom operator – BSNL included – is going to face competition from satellite broadband. The kind of customer who pays Rs 30,000 upfront and Rs 3,000 a month is not the typical BSNL user," the official said. *—PTI*

Adani Green shares climb over 3% after Q1 earnings

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Shares of Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL) on Monday rose over 3 per cent after the company posted a 31 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated net profit in the June quarter.

The company's stock edged higher by 2.93 per cent to settle at Rs 1,004.55 on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 3.86 per cent to Rs 1,013.65.

At the NSE, shares of the firm climbed 3.39 per cent to Rs 1,009.

Adani Green Energy Ltd on Monday posted a 31 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 824 crore in the June quarter, driven by revenues from its core businesses. *—PTI*

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

India is expected to forego customs revenue of Rs 4,060 crore in the first year of the FTA with the UK, as tariffs are reduced or eliminated on a range of goods, think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said on Monday.

The calculation is based on the current import figures from the UK. By the 10th year, as tariff elimination phases-in more broadly, the annual loss is projected to rise to Rs 6,345 crore or around British Pound 574 million, based on FY2025 trade volumes. The India-UK free trade agreement, which was signed on 24 July, will lead to a loss of customs revenue for both the countries, as tariffs are reduced or eliminated on a wide range of goods, GTRI added.

India imported USD 8.6 billion worth of goods from the UK in 2024–25. Industrial products make up the bulk of these imports and face a weighted average tariff of 9.2 per cent. The think tank said that India has committed to eliminating tariffs on 64 per cent of the value of imports from the UK immediately after implementation. *—PTI*

Rare earth elements found in Singrauli: Minister

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

PHOTO: ANI

Promising reserves of rare earth elements have been found in the Singrauli coalfields of Madhya Pradesh, Parliament was informed on Monday.

Rare earth elements (REE) are a group of metallic elements like scandium and yttrium that are used in modern technologies such as clean energy, electronics, electric vehicles and various other industrial applications.

Replying to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Coal and Mines Minister G Kishan Reddy said that Coal India Ltd (CIL) has undertaken research and development projects related to REE found in coal mine waste.

"Results from appraisal of Gondwana Sediments (coal, clay, shale, Sandstone) for Trace Elements & REE concentration in the Singrauli coalfield, indicate that REE are 'promising' in nature (with an enrichment of 250 ppm on a whole coal basis in coal samples and 400 ppm in non-coal samples)," the minister said.

However, economic extraction of REEs is subject to technical advancement and economies of scale.

Results from the assessment of REE and other economic resources from the North Eastern Region Coalfield indicate that total REE is low, but heavy REE contents are relatively high, he explained.

The development of indigenous technology for the extraction of critical minerals, including REE, from north-eastern coalfields has been undertaken to develop an enrichment technique of critical metals by physical separations.

The Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) has signed MoUs with Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT), Bhubaneswar; Non-Ferrous Materials Technology Development Centre (NFTDC), Hyderabad; and IIT, Hyderabad for research in this field," the minister explained. *—PTI*

MakeMyTrip partners with UK's biggest hotel chain

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

NASDAQ-listed travel booking major MakeMyTrip on Monday said it has onboarded 900 properties across key cities in the UK, following a partnership with Premier Inn -- the largest hotel chain in the European nation.

MakeMyTrip has been steadily expanding its international hotel supply through a direct contracting strategy focused on high-demand outbound destinations. In the past year, the Gurugram-headquartered firm has added over 2,000 directly contracted hotels across 50 cities in 20 countries.

Rajesh Magow, Co-Founder and Group CEO, MakeMyTrip, said about offering international accomodation, "Our partnership with Premier Inn in the UK, one of the most preferred destinations for Indian travellers, is a key part of this strategy." *—PTI*

UltraTech lines up ₹10K cr capex for FY26

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Cement maker UltraTech, which expects around 7 per cent growth in FY26, has allocated up to Rs 10,000 crore as capex to bolster its capacity as well as energy and efficiency initiatives, said the company's latest annual report.

The Aditya Birla group firm recently acquired South-based India Cements and the cement business of Kesoram Industries, and added 26.3 MTPA of grey cement capacity to its portfolio. It has planned an organic capacity addition of 28.8 MTPA by FY27.

UltraTech, which crossed the Rs 75,000 crore revenue mark in FY25 and is now very close to 200 MTPA (million tonnes per annum) capacity, anticipate a reduction in "net debt to EBITDA ratio", helped by a higher volume growth and improving margins.

UltraTech also faced a lowered sales realisation amidst tepid demand conditions last year, which marginally declined its earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation compared with FY24.

The cement demand has reached approximately 435 million tonnes in India, and latest government initiatives are expected to bolster the demand further, the company said. *—PTI*

WIPRO SETS UP NEW ₹500-CRORE PCB-MAKING DIVISION

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Engineering and manufacturing solutions provider Wipro Infrastructure Engineering (WIN) on Monday announced the launch of a new business division dedicated to manufacturing high-performance base materials for Printed Circuit Boards (PCBs).

As part of the new division – Wipro Electronic Materials, the company is establishing a Copper Clad Laminate (CCL) manufacturing facility in Karnataka, with an investment of approximately Rs 500 crore, which will create around 350 jobs. "By giving Indian manufacturers reliable access to locally produced, high-quality materials, we are strengthening supply chain resilience and accelerating global competitiveness," Pratik Kumar, WIN CEO & MD of Wipro Enterprises, said.

PHOTO: WIPRO

Currently, India imports 100 per cent of copper-clad laminates, the company said. *—PTI*

Industrial output growth slows to 10-month low

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

India's industrial production growth slowed to a 10-month low of 1.5 per cent in June 2025 due to poor performance of mining and power sectors, which were impacted by early arrival of monsoon and rains, according to official data released on Monday.

The factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), had expanded by 4.9 per cent in June 2024.

The National Statistics Office (NSO) also revised upwards the pace of industrial production growth for May to 1.9 per cent from the earlier estimate of 1.2 per cent released last month.

The previous low pace of growth was recorded in August 2024 when the output growth stayed flat.

The NSO data showed that the manufacturing sector's output growth rose marginally to 3.9 per cent in June 2025 from 3.5 per cent in the year-ago month.

Mining production contracted by 8.7 per cent against a growth of 10.3 per cent recorded a year ago.

Power production declined by 2.6 per cent in June 2025 against 8.6 per cent growth in the year-ago period.

During the April-June period of FY26, industrial production grew by 2 per cent compared to 5.4 per cent a year ago. *—PTI*

BOOSTS SHARE VALUE

Samsung signs £12.7 chip deal with Tesla: Report

SAN FRANSICO, 28 JULY

PHOTO: SAMSUNG

Samsung Electronics has secured a major semiconductor manufacturing deal with Tesla, worth £12.7 billion (22.8 trillion won), Bloomberg reports. While Samsung did not confirm the client, a source familiar with the matter revealed Tesla as the buyer. The agreement, running until the end of 2033, is a significant boost for Samsung's underperforming foundry division.

Although Samsung is a global leader in memory chips, its foundry unit—which produces chips for external clients—has lagged behind rivals due to limited orders and excess manufacturing capacity.

The deal with Tesla signals renewed confidence in Samsung's advanced chip-making capabilities.Following the news, Samsung shares rose by up to 3.5 per cent on the Seoul stock exchange on Monday, marking the company's strongest single-day gain in nearly a month.

Tesla already collaborates with Samsung on chip development, and the new long-term contract is expected to deepen that partnership. The electric vehicle giant relies heavily on high-performance semiconductors to support technologies such as autonomous driving, battery systems, and in-car infotainment.

The agreement arrives at a pivotal moment as Samsung faces stiff competition from Taiwan's TSMC, which dominates the global foundry market with a 67.6 per cent share in Q1 2025, according to TrendForce. Samsung's share slipped to 7.7 per cent, down from 8.1 per cent the previous quarter.

Both Samsung and TSMC are racing to develop 2-nanometre chips, seen as key to powering next-gen applications in electric vehicles, AI, and high-performance computing.

The Tesla deal could mark a turning point for Samsung's chip ambitions. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X/@JAMIE

England include all-rounder Jamie Overton

LONDON, 28 JULY

All-rounder Jamie Overton, who played the only Test match of his career back in 2022, has been recalled to the 15-member England squad for the fifth and final Test against India starting Thursday at the Oval. The 31-year-old Surrey all-rounder, who played three games for Chennai Super Kings in the last edition of IPL, had taken two wickets and scored 97 against New Zealand at Leeds back in 2022. Save the addition of Overton, the 14, who were selected in the previous game, have all been retained. England Test Squad: Ben Stokes (Captain), Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Jacob Bethell, Harry Brook, Brydon Carse, Zak Crawley, Liam Dawson, Ben Duckett, Jamie Overton, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Jamie Smith, Josh Tongue, Chris Woakes. —*PTI*

Sajan finishes 43rd in 200m freestyle at Swimming Worlds

SINGAPORE, 28 JULY

Seasoned Indian swimmer Sajan Prakash failed to make the semifinals of the men's 200m freestyle event at the World Aquatics Championships here on Monday. The 31-year-old butterfly specialist clocked 1:51.57sec to finish fourth in his heat and 43rd overall. The top 16 swimmers advanced to the semifinals. Romania's David Popovici went fastest in the heats, clocking 1:45.43s while Italy's Carlos D'Ambrosio (1:46.67s) was the last swimmer to cut the semifinals. Prakash, a two-time Olympian, will next be in action in the 200m butterfly event on Tuesday.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Arjun Atwal finishes T24 at Senior Open

LONDON, 28 JULY

Arjun Atwal sank six birdies but also gave away five bogeys, two of them in the last five holes, for a final round of 1-under 69 to finish tied-24th alongside defending champion KJ Choi at the ISPS HANDA Senior Open at Sunningdale on Monday.Atwal with cards 67-72-69-71, totalled 3-under for the week and was the top Indian, as Jeev Milkha Singh (69) was T-56 and Jyoti Randhawa (73) T-61.It is the first time three Indians cut a Major, men or women, or Seniors.Atwal, playing only his second event of the year, said, "I have not been able to get many starts, but played well this week. Hopefully, more starts will make things better."—*PTI*

AIFF to name head coach on 1 Aug; Jamil front-runner

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

The next head coach of the Indian men's football team is set to be announced on August 1 when the executive committee of the national federation meets here, with Khalid Jamil emerging as the frontrunner for the vacant job. While Jamil appears to be the preferred candidate of the technical committee of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) in the three-man shortlist, former India coach Stephen Constantine also remains in contention for the top job. "Yes, the executive committee is meeting on August 1 to decide on the men's senior national team head coach," a top official of the AIFF said. The members have been given the CVs of all three short-listed candidates and what they want as remuneration, etc.—*PTI*

Divya Deshmukh beats Humpy to become GM

Deshmukh came with a plan and got a sizeable advantage

BATUMI, 28 JULY

After 24 days of fighting chess, Divya Deshmukh became the FIDE Women's World Cup champion at Georgia's Batumi after defeating the veteran Koneru Humpy in the final via the tiebreaks.

Divya's win also makes her eligible to be India's fourth woman to become a grandmaster.This was a battle of generations, with the 19-year-old Divya being half the age of the veteran Humpy, who is India's first woman to become a grandmaster.

Since Humpy became a GM, just two women have followed suit and become grandmasters.

Thanks to the win today, Divya joins that elusive list. On Monday, after the first game ended in a draw, Divya won the second tiebreak game thanks to a blunder from Humpy."It was fate," an emotional Divya said right after her win. "Before the tournament, I was thinking that I could maybe earn a grandmaster norm here.

And at the end, I became a grandmaster."The first two classical games between Humpy and Divya had ended in draws. The first game, which was played on Saturday, was where Divya had the best chances to win, while playing with white pieces.

Divya Deshmukh, before the start of her tiebreaks against Koneru Humpy in the FIDE Women's World Cup at Batumi PHOTO: X/@FIDE

> I didn't even have one (GM) norm, and now I am the Grandmaster
>
> -Divya Deshmukh, Women's World Cup champion

She came with a plan and got a sizeable advantage on the board. But then at the end, she scuffed her lines and allowed Humpy to equalise.Divya had said that the draw had "felt like a loss" to her. "I had seen everything (beforehand). So I was disappointed by that," she said.

President Murmu congratulates Divya Deshmukh

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday congratulated chess player Divya Deshmukh for winning the FIDE Women's World Cup in Georgia, saying the youngster's achievement underlines the abundance of talent in the country.

Deshmukh achieved the feat with a tie-break win over seasoned compatriot Koneru Humpy.

"My heartiest congratulations to Divya Deshmukh, who has become the first Indian woman to win the FIDE Women's World Cup, that too, at a very young age of nineteen. —*PTI*

SWIMMING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Summer McIntosh goes for her second gold on Day 2

SINGAPORE, 28 JULY

It's Day 2 at the swimming World Championships in Singapore. That means it's a chance for Summer McIntosh to add her second gold medal after winning the 400 freestyle on the opening day.

The 18-year-old Canadian is trying for five individual golds across the eight-day event in Singapore. On Monday, she's a strong favorite to get her second gold, this time in the 200-meter individual medley.

She set the world record of 2 minutes, 05.70 seconds at the Canadian trials a few months ago. McIntosh is expected to be challenged by American Alex Walsh.

Also in the field is 12-year-old Chinese Yu Zidi, whose age and astounding times are the talk of global swimming.

The women's 100 butterfly is another eye-catching race. American Gretchen Walsh, Alex's older sister, is the favorite and set the world record of 54.60 earlier this year. Roos Vanotterdijk of Belgium and Australia's Alexandria Perkins will push Walsh.

Two more finals are set.

Qin Haiyang of China and Nicolo Marinenghi of Italy are the favorites in the 100 breaststroke. The Italian is the Olympian champion from Paris, and Qin won this event two years ago at the worlds in Fukuoka, Japan. The 50 fly final is wide open, but the quickest qualifiers were Maxime Grousset of France and Noe Ponti of Switzerland. —*PTI*

Indian GM P Iniyan wins Dole Chess title

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

Indian Grandmaster P Iniyan clinched the 2nd Dole Open International Chess title, defeating Poland's Jan Malek in the tie-breaker after both players were deadlocked at the top with 7.5 points apiece in the French city of Aix-en-Provence.

Iniyan, 22, who hails from Erode in Tamil Nadu, remained undefeated in the tournament, scoring six wins, including against International Masters from Uzbekistan, Madagascar, Turkey, France, and Poland, besides three draws. —*PTI*

I think we have shown why we are a great team: Gill

MANCHESTER, 28 JULY

India skipper Shubman Gill reckons the belief to stage an epic final day turnaround in the fourth Test against England stemmed from his partnership with KL Rahul, and in doing so, they showed why they are a "great team".

Starting their second innings 311 runs in arrears after England racked up a massive first-innings total, Gill, Ravindra Jadeja, and Washington Sundar struck excellent hundreds to bail their team from the brink of defeat and remain in contention to level the five-match series. "To be able to have that same mindset for 140 overs is very difficult, and that is what differentiates a good team from a great team, and I think we showed that today, that is why we are a great team," Gill told the BCCI TV. Rahul played a neat 90-run knock and was associated in a partnership of 188 runs with Gill, after which the day belonged to the duo of Jadeja and Washington.

Shardul and Kamboj is likely to be benched

India's preference to bat till number eight at the expense of a specialist bowler has been constantly questioned throughout the series, and more so after Shardul Thakur, playing in place of the injured Nitish Reddy, was used for only 11 overs at Old Trafford. But with India conceding more than 600 runs for the first time since 2014 at Old Trafford, the case for including an out-and-out wicket-taker like Kuldeep Yadav, who has been warming the bench for the past 40 days, is stronger than ever. After an underwhelming debut, Anshul Kamboj is likely to make way for a fit-again Akash Deep or Prasidh Krishna.

India wicket-keeper-batter Rishabh Pant was ruled out of the fifth and final Test against England after sustaining a fracture to his right foot on day one of the fourth match here.

Tamil Nadu's N Jagadeesan has been named as his replacement

Jagadeesan has replaced Pant, who was ruled out of the fifth and final Test against England after fracturing his right foot during the first innings at Old Trafford. The 29-year-old Tamil Nadu keeper has been brought in as cover for Dhruv Jurel, who kept wicket in the third and fourth Tests, and is expected to start in India's XI for the series decider starting Thursday, with the visitors trailing 1-2. —*PTI*

Indian biker Noah finishes fifth at Baja Aragon 2025

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

India's Harith Noah, representing the Sherco TVS Rally Factory Team, delivered a gritty and determined performance to finish overall fifth in the 450cc category of the FIM Bajas World Cup at Baja Aragón 2025 in Spain.

Throughout three challenging stages across the Spanish desert terrain, Harith clocked a total time of 7:16:32.0s, placing him among the elite finishers in a field stacked with top international competitors.Held from 25 to 27 July in Teruel, Spain, the 41st edition of Baja Aragón tested riders with its demanding mix of high-speed gravel tracks, rocky climbs, and soaring summer temperatures, true to its reputation as one of the most iconic events on the rally-raid calendar.

Harith's finish came as part of a competitive top five, which included fellow Sherco TVS rider and rally veteran Lorenzo Santolino Sánchez of Spain, who clinched the overall victory with a time of 6:38:59.0s.Lorenzo was followed by Neels Théric of France and Javi Vega Puerta of Spain. Konrad Dabrowski of Poland, riding for Duust Rally Team, finished fourth, just ahead of Harith in fifth. —*PTI*

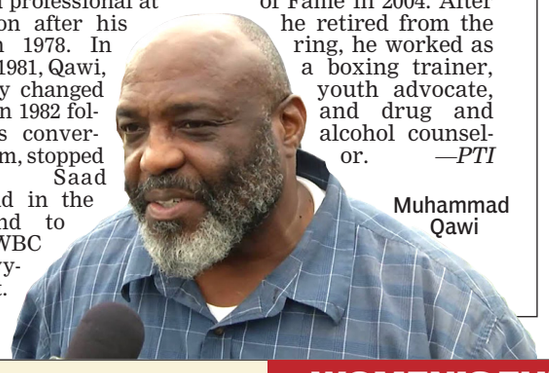
Dwight Muhammad Qawi, boxer, dies at 72

NEW JERSEY, 28 JULY

Dwight Muhammad Qawi, the Hall of Fame fighter who took up boxing in prison and became a two-weight world champion, has died. He was 72. Qawi's sister, Wanda King, said he died Friday following a five-year battle with dementia.

Born Dwight Braxton in Baltimore, Qawi grew up in Camden. He competed in the boxing program at Rahway State Prison while serving a sentence for armed robbery, and turned professional at age 25 soon after his release in 1978. In December 1981, Qawi, who legally changed his name in 1982 following his conversion to Islam, stopped Matthew Saad Muhammad in the 10th round to win the WBC light heavyweight belt.

Qawi stopped Saad again eight months later, taking six rounds. After a loss to Michael Spinks, the 5-foot-7 Qawi, called "The Camden Buzzsaw", moved up in weight and took the WBA cruiserweight title from Piet Crous in July 1985. Qawi lost the title to future heavyweight champion Evander Holyfield in a 15-rounder in July 1986. Qawi retired in 1998 at age 46 with a 41-11-1 record and 25 knockouts. He was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 2004. After he retired from the ring, he worked as a boxing trainer, youth advocate, and drug and alcohol counselor. —*PTI*



Muhammad Qawi

SC quashes FIR against shuttler Lakshya Sen

NEW DELHI, 28 JULY

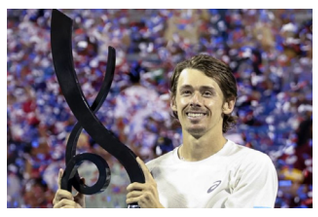
The Supreme Court on Monday quashed an FIR against badminton player Lakshya Sen, his family members, and his coach in the birth certificate forgery case. A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Aravind Kumar said the continuation of criminal proceedings against Sen was an abuse of the process of the court. The top court observed that the very allegations that were examined and debunked by competent authorities.

were now being sought to be revived, as it ruled out any fresh evidence meriting reopening of the inquiry.

"The appellants, particularly appellant 1 and 3, are sportspersons of national standing, having represented India in international badminton tournaments and having earned multiple accolades, including medals at the Commonwealth Games and BWF international events," the court said. —*PTI*

WASHINGTON OPEN

Alex De Minaur wins title



WASHINGTON, 28 JULY

Alex de Minaur said he "just kind of knew he could do it" after saving three championship points to clinch the Washington Open title on Monday. De Minaur endured a topsy-turvy final against Alejandro Davidovich Fokina but dug deep to prevail 5-7 6-1 7-6, 7-3, in just over three hours., The Australian fought back from an early breakdown in the first set but could not overcome a second loss of serve late on as Davidovich Fokina took the lead., However, De Minaur wasted no time in the second set, racing into a 3-0 lead, before a second three-game winning streak saw him take the match to a decider.

Fernandez cruises past Kalinskaya

Leylah Fernandez earned the biggest win of her career as she beat Anna Kalinskaya 6-1, 6-2 in the Washington Open final on Sunday night. After a brief rain delay in the nation's capital, Fernandez who was just one game away from defeat in the semifinals overcame the extreme humidity to capture her first WTA 500 title in her first final in over a year. The Canadian gained the upper hand early on, securing a break thanks to a Kalinskaya double fault, before breaking again with a sharp return winner. The Russian world number 48 appeared to struggle physically as Fernandez calmly served out the opening set in just under half an hour. —*PTI*

WOMEN'S EURO 2025 TITLE

England beats Spain in a penalty shootout

BASEL, 28 JULY

More drama, another penalty shootout, and never giving up. England successfully defended its Women's European Championship title on Sunday night in its special way, thriving in high tension yet again to take down world champion Spain in a shootout in the final.

Chloe Kelly lashed in her spot kick to give England a 3-1 win on penalties after a 1-1 draw after extra time.

"I was cool, I was composed, and I knew I was going to hit the back of the net," said Kelly, whose goals decided a second straight Women's Euros final, and also the semifinal five days earlier. England goalkeeper Hannah Hampton saved spot kicks from Mariona Caldentey and Spain superstar Aitana Bonmatí, before substitute Salma Paralluelo dragged her shot wide of goal.

England's defender Leah Williamson and England's midfielder Keira Walsh lift the trophy PHOTO: X/@EURO2025

The defending champion won the only way it knew how at this thrilling Euro 2025. "It was the most chaotic tournament we played," said England coach Sarina Wiegman, who has now won three straight Women's Euros titles. —*PTI*

Osaka announces she is no longer working with coach

WASHINGTON, 28 JULY

Naomi Osaka and coach Patrick Mouratoglou are done working together after less than a year, the four-time Grand Slam champion announced on social media.

"Merci, Patrick," Osaka began her post, with a photo of her hitting a practice serve while he stands nearby. "It was such a great experience learning from you. Wishing you nothing but the best. You are one of the coolest people I've ever met, and I'm sure I'll see you around."

The news comes three days after Osaka lost her second match at the D.C. Open and just before she begins competing in Toronto.

The U.S. Open, the year's last major tournament and an event Osaka won twice, begins in New York on Aug. 24.

Osaka hired Mouratoglou, who was the longtime coach of Serena Williams when she fired Wim Fissette shortly after her second-round exit at last year's US Open.—*PTI*